PARIS 1961

Algerians, State Terror, and Memory

JIM HOUSE & NEIL MACMASTER

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JIM HOUSE
and
NEIL MACMASTER

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Michael R. House
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Abbreviations

A.I	Affaires indigènes [Morocco]
ACON	Archives confédérales CFTC (Paris)
ADSSD	Archives départementales de la Seine-Saint-Denis (Bobigny)
AGTA	Amicale générale des travailleurs algériens
ALN	Armée de libération nationale
AN	Assemblée nationale
ANM	Au nom de la mémoire
APP	Archives de la Préfecture de police (Paris)
BAV	Brigade des agressions et violences
BDIC	Bibliothèque de documentation internationale contemporaine (Nanterre)
BMO	*Bulletin municipal officiel* (Paris)
BRS	Bureau de renseignements spécialisés
CA	Commission administrative (SGP)
CAC	Centre des archives contemporaines (Fontainebleau)
CAE	Commission administrative extraordinaire (SGP)
CAOM	Centre des archives d'outre-mer (Aix-en-Provence)
CARAN	Centre d'accueil et de recherche des archives nationales (Paris)
CCAP	Comité de coordination d'action psychologique
CF	Comité fédéral (Fédération de France- FLN)
CFTC	Confédération française des travailleurs chrétiens
CGS	Conseil général de la Seine
CGT	Confédération générale du travail
CHEAM	Centre des hautes études sur l'Afrique et l'Asie moderne
CHEVS	Centre d'histoire de l'Europe du vingtième siècle (Paris)
CIMADE	Comité inter-mouvements auprès des évacués
CIV	Centre d'identification de Vincennes
CMP	Conseil municipal de Paris
CNRA	Conseil national de la Révolution algérienne
CRA	Centre de renseignement et d'action
CRS	Compagnie républicaine de sécurité
CTAM	Conseiller(s) technique(s) aux affaires musulmanes
CTT	Centre de tri et de transit

DOP	Détachement opérationnel de protection
DST	Direction de la surveillance du territoire
ENA	Étoile nord-africaine
FAAD	Front algérien d'action démocratique
FAS	Fonds d'action sociale
FEN	Fédération de l'éducation nationale
FF- FLN	Fédération de France (Front de libération nationale)
FLN	Front de libération nationale
FMA	Français musulman(s) d'Algérie
FN	Front national
FO	Force ouvrière
FNSP	Fondation nationale des sciences politiques
FPA	Force de police auxiliaire (*harkis*)
GA	Groupe armé
GAD	Groupe d'autodéfense
GP	Gauche prolétarienne
GPRA	Gouvernement provisoire de la République algérienne
HLM	Habitation à loyer modéré
IGAME	Inspecteur général de l'administration en mission extraordinaire
IHESI	Institut des hautes études de la sécurité intérieure
IHS	Institut d'histoire sociale (CGT)
IML	Institut médico-légal
JODP	*Journal officiel, débats parlementaires*
LDH	Ligue des droits de l'homme
MNA	Mouvement national algérien
MRAP	Mouvement contre le racisme et pour la Paix (latterly, Mouvement contre le racisme et pour l'Amitié entre les peuples)
MTA	Mouvement des travailleurs arabes
MTLD	Mouvement pour le triomphe des libertés démocratiques
OAS	Organisation armée secrète
OPA	Organisation politico-administrative
OR	Officier de renseignement
OS	Organisation spéciale

PCF	Parti communiste français
PJ	Police judiciaire
PPA	Parti du peuple algérien
PS	Parti socialiste
PSU	Parti socialiste unifié
PUF	Presses universitaires de France
RATP	Régie autonome des transports parisiens
SA	Service action
SAINA	Service de surveillance, protection et d'assistance aux indigènes nord-africains
SAS	Section administrative spécialisée
SAT-FMA	Service d'assistance technique aux Français musulmans d'Algérie
SAU	Section administrative urbaine
SCAA	Service de coordination des affaires algériennes
SCINA	Service de coordination des informations nord-africaines
SDECE	Service de documentation extérieure et de contre-espionnage
SFIO	Section française de l'internationale ouvrière
SGEN	Syndicat général de l'Éducation nationale
SGP	Syndicat général de la police
SHAT	Service historique de l'armée de terre (Vincennes)
SPF	Secours populaire français
SSFNA	Service social et familial nord-africain
TPFA	Tribunaux permanents des forces armées
UD	Union départementale
UDMA	Union démocratique du Manifeste algérien
UEC	Union des étudiants communistes
UFF	Union des femmes françaises
UGEMA	Union générale des étudiants musulmans algériens
UGTA	Union générale des travailleurs algériens
UNEF	Union nationale des étudiants de France
URP	Union régionale parisienne (CFTC)

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General Introduction

As darkness fell on the evening of 17 October 1961 Parisians queuing for cinemas, seated in cafés, or strolling the central boulevards were astonished by the unprecedented sight of tens of thousands of Algerian demonstrators marching in disciplined rank through the heart of the capital in protest against police repression. The surprise of bystanders arose from a number of causes: by the autumn of 1961 France had been engaged for seven years in a violent colonial war to crush the Algerian struggle for independence, yet here was the 'enemy', the supporters and militants of the Front de libération nationale (FLN), defiantly demonstrating en masse in the streets of the capital. Secondly, throughout the war the 180,000 Algerian migrants in the Paris region lived in squalid lodging houses and shanty-towns, 'ghettoized' or enclave zones in the industrial suburbs that were isolated from the chic boulevards of the centre and in which the inhabitants remained largely invisible to most Parisians. A key objective of the FLN organizers was, through an 'invasion' of the city centre by three massive columns, to break the spatial segregation imposed on the immigrant workers, a segregation that had been reinforced by violent police repression and, since 5 October, by a discriminatory night-time curfew imposed uniquely on Algerian workers. Through a total mobilization of the Algerian community, a pacific demonstration which included women, children, and the elderly, the FLN intended to dramatically show the media and international opinion its uncontested popular support base as the unique voice of Algerian nationalism and reinforce the position of its leadership which was currently engaged in negotiations for independence with de Gaulle's government.

As the three columns converged through the rain on the central area, closely marshalled by FLN militants, the predominant feeling among the demonstrators was one of quiet pride and even euphoria that at long last they could publicly affirm their solidarity and identity as Algerians after many years of extreme police repression, isolation, and humiliation. Although there was trepidation when confronted with the heavily armed ranks of riot police, few imagined the violence with which the security forces would unleash a wave of murderous attacks, the bloodiest act of state repression of street protest in Western Europe in modern history.[1]

[1] If we leave aside situations of insurrection, revolution, or civil war in Europe, the number of instances in modern history when state forces have fired on and killed political street demonstrators has been relatively limited, but for comparison the following can be noted: Champ de Mars, Paris, 17 July 1791, the National Guard killed 50 demonstrators; Peterloo, Manchester, 16 August 1819, 11 killed; right-wing riot outside Paris parliament, 6 February 1934, 15 killed; 14 July 1953 demonstration, Paris, 7 killed; 'Bloody Sunday' in Londonderry, 30 January 1972, British troops killed 14. On *Kristallnacht*, 9 November 1938, although not a demonstration, Nazi gangs killed 91 Jews in

This study asks three central questions. First, why did such extreme violence take place within a European capital towards the end of a long colonial war when the opposing sides were moving to the negotiating table? Second, how was it possible that such a dramatic event in the streets of the capital could be virtually erased from public visibility in France for several decades? Third, how and why did the memories of 17 October come to occupy a key place in public debate from the 1980s?

THE GENERAL HISTORICAL CONTEXT

To approach the first of these questions we look briefly at the wider context of the Algerian War of Independence.[2] At the end of the Second World War, after over a century of French colonial occupation, the governments of the Fourth Republic and the dominant European settler elites in Algeria turned their backs on the opportunity to carry out significant reforms that would have offered a degree of political, social, and economic integration to the indigenous people, a population of some nine million which was subjected to racial domination and exploitation by a white minority of one million. Instead these European settlers (*pieds-noirs*) opted for a policy of reinforcing their privileged position by a system of electoral fraud, legal repression, and military 'containment', and—almost inevitably—created the conditions for the spread of pro-independence nationalism among the mass of poor and illiterate Algerian peasants, urban labourers, and migrant workers. When the war for independence began with the insurrection of 1 November 1954 the government response was not, as in Morocco and Tunisia, to move towards a negotiated political resolution that allowed a relatively peaceful transition to independence, but rather to opt for military repression that embroiled France in one of the most protracted and bloodiest wars of decolonization. In many instances the post-1945 withdrawal of European states from empire was relatively ordered but where there were large white settler communities, rejecting the nationalist threat of 'the coffin or the suitcase', Europeans were fully prepared to engage in brutal repression in order to defend entrenched racial hegemony (Kenya, Algeria, Southern Rhodesia, Angola, Mozambique, South Africa).[3] The tragedy in Algeria

Germany. Global massacres in colonial or authoritarian regimes are legion, e.g. at Amritsar, 13 April 1919, British troops killed 379 Indian nationalists; at the Mexico Olympics in 1968, some 267 students were killed; and an estimated 155 at Tiananmen Square in 1989.

[2] There is a vast literature on the Algerian War, but for a recent overview see Sylvie Thénault, *Histoire de la guerre d'indépendance algérienne* (Paris: Flammarion, 2005); Benjamin Stora, *Algeria 1830–2000: A Short History* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2002).

[3] John Springhall, *Decolonization since 1945: The Collapse of European Overseas Empires* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2001), ch. 6. The 'Mau Mau' war in Kenya showed some remarkable similarities with Algeria; see David Anderson, *Histories of the Hanged: Britain's Dirty War in Kenya and the End of Empire* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 2005); Caroline Elkins, *Britain's Gulag: The Brutal End of Empire in Kenya* (London: Jonathan Cape, 2005).

was that the Socialist government of Guy Mollet, giving in to right-wing settler demonstrations in February 1956, swung firmly behind an armed 'solution' and on 16 March passed through Parliament a Special Powers Act that enabled it to surrender both civilian and military authority to the generals. This created a dangerous situation in which the army was able to achieve considerable autonomy from Paris and to engage, virtually unchecked, in a massive scale of violence against the civilian population (aerial bombardment with napalm, destruction of villages, mass internment, systematic torture, summary execution, massacre), but also to establish a political power base that could be used to threaten the national government.

The generals in Algeria attempted a military–settler coup on three occasions, only the first of which, the events of 13 May 1958, was successful. Situated at a mid-way point in the eight years of war, the 13 May marked an important watershed since it led to the immediate collapse of the Fourth Republic, brought General de Gaulle back to power, and created the constitutional and political system of the current Fifth Republic. The key events with which this book is concerned, the violent repression of 17 October 1961, took place under the authority of the Gaullist regime, and in streets and squares directly under the walls of the presidential Élysée Palace, the prime minister's residence, the various ministries, as well as the National Assembly and Senate. To explain these events we need to understand the overall policies and intentions of de Gaulle during the second half of the War of Independence (May 1958 to March 1962).

Historians continue to be divided over the interpretation of de Gaulle's Algerian policy and the General's penchant for secrecy and delphic ambiguity makes it possible to sustain cogent but diametrically opposed theories. The view most widely accepted among French historians is that de Gaulle, prior to or at the moment of returning to power, believed that some form of independence was inevitable and that it was in the best interest of France to disengage from this colonial quagmire in order to redirect its energies and resources towards continental Europe, economic modernization within the framework of the European Economic Community, and the formation of a modern defence force armed with an independent nuclear deterrent. However, it is argued, de Gaulle had to proceed down this road with extreme caution if he was not to be toppled by a settler–army alliance that controlled formidable political and armed forces. The General used consummate skill to re-establish control over the Algerian administration, placing his own men (Delouvrier, Joxe, Morin) in the key posts, and gradually isolating and removing from Algeria the most politically dangerous of the generals (Massu, Salan, Challe). A crucial political watershed was reached when de Gaulle, in his radio speech of 16 September 1959, opened the prospect of self-determination, and through 1960–1 he undertook a number of conciliatory steps towards the FLN that prepared the way for negotiation by restraining the most brutal army

practices (torture, summary execution), emptying the internment camps, and calling for a unilateral ceasefire.[4]

However, this predominant interpretation sits ill with other aspects of the war and, in particular, why de Gaulle's government countenanced massive violent repression on its own doorstep in October 1961. This contradiction can be resolved, and a more cogent understanding of the events in Paris be achieved, through a quite opposite interpretation of Gaullist policy. De Gaulle's record in Algeria, it can be argued, far from achieving a skilled disengagement, was one of deepening and prolonged military violence that lasted nearly four years, longer than under the maligned Fourth Republic, and one of overall failure.[5] He escalated a brutal military offensive under General Challe during 1959–60 and this, along with the huge investment and attempt at economic modernization under the Constantine Plan announced in October 1958, indicated an ambition to hold on to the colony. Even after de Gaulle bowed towards self-determination in November 1959, he and Michel Debré, his right-wing prime minister who was a fervent advocate of *Algérie française*, refused to negotiate with the Algerian Provisional Government (Gouvernement provisoire de la République algérienne, GPRA) or to recognize the FLN as the exclusive representative of the Algerian people. Until as late as September 1961, in spite of the referendum of 8 January, which provided resounding support for Algerian autonomy, and the negotiations at Evian (20 May to 13 June) and Lugrin (20 to 28 July), de Gaulle and Debré prolonged the war unnecessarily and clung on to the illusion that they could outflank the FLN, come to terms with far more compliant and moderate Algerian representatives, and retain French economic and strategic interests, including control of the Saharan oilfields and nuclear test sites.

De Gaulle tried to destabilize the FLN during 1961 by secretly establishing a 'Third Force' Algerian political movement, a puppet or quisling body with which he could then pretend to do business, and by publicizing plans for an apartheid or Israeli-style division of the colony into 'white' and 'Arab' zones. The General was responsible for a dysfunctional regime that during 1961 contributed to a highly unstable and chaotic situation which saw a major army revolt in April 1961, continuing execution by guillotine of FLN militants, a growing wave of bombings and assassinations by the terrorist Organisation armée secrète (OAS), panic among the settlers and *harki* combatants,[6] and an attempt by both sides to strengthen their negotiating hand by intensifying military action after 10 August 1961.

It is within this context of chaos and violence in the final stages of the Algerian War that the massacre of 17 October 1961 is to be understood. De Gaulle, far from maintaining a masterly control over the levers of power, went through bouts

[4] For a balanced summary of this position see Thénault, *Histoire de la guerre*, 188–204.

[5] For a cogent exposition of this interpretation see Irwin M. Wall, *France, the United States and the Algerian War* (Berkeley, Calif.: University of California Press, 2001).

[6] The *harkis* were native armed units under French military command.

of depression at the growing realization that Algeria was slipping from French grasp, and undermined coherent government policy by using Louis Joxe, Minister for Algerian Affairs, to bypass his own prime minister on key decisions. De Gaulle also allowed Debré and other 'ultras' like Roger Frey and Maurice Papon free rein to engage in agressive actions against the FLN.[7] Hubert Beuve-Méry, editor of *Le Monde*, noted, in the context of the extremely violent repression unleashed by Papon in late 1961, that de Gaulle had continued to tolerate 'in high level posts, even within his immediate entourage, men who have betrayed or sabotaged his political position'. He had removed Edmond Michelet, judged as 'completely faithful to his ideas, only to replace him by M. Chenot, who was more docile and receptive to the orders of M. Debré'.[8] Against this background, army and police massacres of Algerian protesters continued unabated in Algeria: during the popular urban demonstrations of 10–11 December 1960 the security forces shot and killed over 100 unarmed civilians and a similar number again on 5 July 1961. A 'few more' in Paris would appear to have been of little concern to de Gaulle, who was no liberal humanist and had in 1945 presided over a government that massacred many thousands of Algerians in the north Constantinois region. The brutal repression of the unarmed and peaceful demonstration of 17 October was one among many acts of state violence as the colonial regime disintegrated: what distinguished the event was its location in the capital, the heart of empire, rather than in the streets of Algerian cities.

Viewing the events of 1961 from the opposite side, that of the FLN Fédération de France, it can be argued that the Algerian nationalists contributed a further element of instability to a volatile situation. By 1958 the FLN, after a bloody civil war, had largely eradicated from the Paris region its political opponents in the Mouvement national algérien (MNA) and established a sophisticated organizational control over the emigrant community. In principle, the leadership of the FLN in Tunisia commanded a centralized and authoritarian pyramidal structure that dictated policy at the lowest levels, but in reality the organization was constantly torn by complex internal factional struggles. The crisis of deepening state repression in Paris during the summer of 1961 can be in part attributed to a revolt of Paris militants against orders for a quasi-ceasefire and by a sustained campaign of assassination of police officers. The leaders of the French Federation in Cologne re-established control with some difficulty, but one means of achieving this was through the organization of the demonstration of 17 October which, it was hoped, would provide a powerful expression of cohesion. However, the Federation decision to demonstrate was in turn in defiance of the Provisional Government (GPRA) and may have been part of a bid to assert its own popular

[7] Maurice Faivre, *Conflits d'autorités durant la guerre d'Algérie* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 2004), 50–60, based on research in the archives of Michel Debré.

[8] Centre d'histoire de l'Europe du vingtième siècle (CHEVS), Paris, Fonds H. Beuve-Méry, Box 141, letter to Jean Bruzel, 28 Dec. 1961. Unless indicated otherwise, all translations are the authors' own.

support-base in view of the imminent post-independence struggle for power. Newly opened police and army archives are not only of interest for the light which they throw on the nature of state repression in Paris, but equally for the insight they provide into the internal and clandestine decision-making processes of the FLN as it reacted to this challenge.[9]

THE CURRENT HISTORICAL DEBATE

The historian, when moving on from the wider framework of the Algerian War to focus on the specific detail of 17 October, faces a complex of issues relating to both source material and interpretation. One way of introducing this field is through a brief historiographical survey of the key books and investigations that appeared in two phases between 1985 and 2005.

A first phase (*c.*1985–96) was marked by a strict French government refusal, based on a law of 1979 that severely restricted access to archives, to allow historians to consult official police and judicial records relating to 17 October. This ban forced investigators to hunt around for every scrap of alternative information, from journalistic sources to oral testimony and private papers. The first significant book to appear in this period was Michel Levine's, *Les Ratonnades d'octobre: Un meurtre collectif à Paris en 1961*, published in 1985,[10] which was based on contemporary tracts, newspapers, diaries, FLN archives, and interviews with numerous Algerian and French participants or observers. Levine, while concluding that the number of deaths would probably never be known, noted various estimates of 200 victims on 17 October. At this time there was still little public interest in the events and Levine was so disillusioned at the lack of response to his findings that he destroyed all his valuable research notes.

This was followed in 1986 by Ali Haroun's detailed history of the FLN in France, *La 7è Wilaya*.[11] Haroun was in an exceptional position to provide an insider account since in 1961 he had been a member of the five man Comité fédéral based in Germany that was in command of the entire FLN network in France and which had planned the demonstration of 17 October. Haroun was also able to interview former FLN militants and had access to his own private archive of FLN documents, including numerous reports drawn up by cadres on police violence and the numbers of dead and injured. Haroun concluded from these reports that approximately 200 Algerians had been killed during the events, while a further 2,300 received serious injuries. However, his chapter on

[9] See the ground-breaking work of Gilbert Meynier, *Histoire intérieure du FLN, 1954–1962* (Paris: Fayard, 2002); and for 17 October specifically, Neil MacMaster and Jim House, 'La Fédération de France du FLN et l'organisation du 17 octobre 1961', *Vingtième siècle: Revue d'histoire*, 83 (July–Sept. 2004), 145–60.

[10] Michel Levine, *Les Ratonnades d'octobre: Un meurtre collectif à Paris en 1961* (Paris: Ramsay, 1985).

[11] Ali Haroun, *La 7è Wilaya: La Guerre du FLN en France, 1954–1962* (Paris: Seuil, 1986).

'Octobre à Paris' was disappointing both in its brevity and for a rather uninformative interpretation that reflected Haroun's close proximity to the ideology of the ruling FLN party. For this he was severely taken to task by his political opponent, another former member of the FLN Comité fédéral, the historian Mohammed Harbi, who at the same time published in the journal *Sou'al* (1987) a number of invaluable FLN documents relating to the planning of 17 October.[12]

In 1988, the former Prefect (Head) of Police, Maurice Papon, who had directed police operations on the 17 October, published *Les Chevaux du pouvoir*[13] in which he extolled his heroic role in smashing the FLN and repeated the dubious version of events that he had spun in October 1961. Papon claimed that no massacre had taken place, that FLN gunmen had fired at the police from the safety of the demonstration in order to provoke a bloodbath, and that his men had shown valiant self-discipline in containing a dangerous assault on the seat of government during which only two Algerians had died. Although Papon was able to refer to key documents in his private possession, reports identical to those later found by us in the archives of the Prefecture of Police, his selective use of this material, none of which was available to historians until after 1998, meant that his self-serving autobiography offered no new information or insights. Some critics viewed the book as an attempt to distract attention from the charges then being made against him for his role in deporting many Jews from Bordeaux to the gas chambers in 1942–4.

Finally, in 1991 Jean-Luc Einaudi published *La Bataille de Paris, 17 octobre 1961*, the single most ground-breaking and influential investigation of the events.[14] Although Einaudi was denied access to government archives, he was able to unearth a considerable body of new material, partly through access to the archives of the FLN Fédération de France held by Ali Haroun but, most significantly, by a considerable number of interviews with both Algerian and French participants who provided graphic and detailed evidence of police violence. Einaudi, like Haroun, concluded that some 200 Algerians had died on 17 October, a figure that rapidly became an established fact in much of the French press and on the left. Although Einaudi was later to be subjected to criticism, most notably by the historian Jean-Paul Brunet, as a left-wing militant who grossly exaggerated state violence and arrived at inflated figures through a failure to subject his sources to critical assessment, *La Bataille de Paris* provided incontrovertible evidence of extreme levels of police repression. Einaudi's work also, unlike Levine's book six years earlier, seems to have appeared at a moment when public and media interest was more receptive and preceded a wave of further investigation including Anne Tristan's dossier of remarkable photographs, *Le Silence du*

[12] Mohammed Harbi (ed.), 'L'Algérie vingt-cinq ans après', *Sou'al: Revue quadrimestrielle*, 7 (Sept. 1987), 7–110.

[13] Maurice Papon, *Les Chevaux du pouvoir: Le Préfet de police du général de Gaulle ouvre ses dossiers, 1958–1967* (Paris: Plon, 1988).

[14] Jean-Luc Einaudi, *La Bataille de Paris, 17 octobre 1961* (Paris: Seuil, 1991).

fleuve (1991),[15] and the powerful television documentary, *Une journée portée disparue* (1993).[16]

The situation towards the end of the first phase (1985–96) was that finally the barrier of silence surrounding the 17 October was being broken, and a significant body of 'memory activists' was beginning to take interest in this as a campaigning issue. However, most of the leading authors could be accused of producing accounts that were flawed by strong ideological and political bias, Haroun as the defender of an official FLN 'line', Papon in his role as head of the Paris police, and Einaudi as a left-wing militant. In addition, little of this production was by academic historians applying a critical methodology to test the veracity of evidence, and although some university researchers were beginning to show interest in the topic, most notably Sylvie Thénault in 1991 and Brigitte Gaïti in 1994,[17] academic investigation was still hampered by the lack of access to state archives. Although the figure of 200 dead had received widespread currency, some doubt would continue to hover over this number and whether a 'massacre' had taken place in Paris as long as official papers remained closed.

This was to change dramatically with the opening of a second phase of historical investigation that began from the end of 1997. As the French media showed a growing interest in the events of 17 October, so there was also a demand for the opening of the state archives. A rapid shift in this direction occurred as a result of the high-profile trial of Maurice Papon (October 1997–April 1998) for crimes against humanity during the Second World War, during which the prosecution seized the opportunity to launch what the defence lawyers called the 'trial within a trial', an exposure of Papon's repressive role as Paris Prefect of Police in 1961. The publicity surrounding the trial precipitated the Interior Minister, Jean-Pierre Chevènement, to announce on 17 October 1997, the thirty-sixth anniversary of the repression, the intention to open the state archives and the same day he instructed Dieudonné Mandelkern to head a commission to investigate and report on the police archives. However, it soon became apparent that the Socialist-led government was backtracking or acting in a secretive manner: the Mandelkern Report, discreetly released to the press in May 1998, was a disappointing document. Its members concluded, after only a few weeks' investigation of the immense deposit, that estimates of several hundred deaths were wrong since at most only a few dozen Algerians had died in October 1961.[18] Historians were

[15] Anne Tristan, *Le Silence du fleuve: Ce crime que nous n'avons toujours pas nommé* (Paris: Au nom de la mémoire, 1991).

[16] Directed and produced by Philip Brooks and Alan Hayling, this film was first shown in the UK on 13 July 1992 on Channel 4 as *Secret History: Drowning by Bullets*, and on 2 March 1993 on France-3 as *Une journée portée disparue*.

[17] Sylvie Thénault, 'La Manifestation des Algériens à Paris le 17 octobre 1961 et sa répression', mémoire de maîtrise (Université de Paris-X, 1991); Brigitte Gaïti, 'Les Ratés de l'histoire: Une manifestation sans suites: le 17 octobre 1961 à Paris', *Sociétés contemporaines*, 18–19 (1994), 11–37.

[18] 'Rapport sur les archives de la préfecture de police relatives à la manifestation organisée par le FLN le 17 octobre 1961' (6 Jan. 1998), hereafter Mandelkern Report. The diffusion of the Mandelkern Report was severely restricted.

still not allowed to check this new official version of the events through direct access to the original documents, except for three hand-picked historians, including Jean-Paul Brunet, who were quietly given exceptional access to the total archive by the Prefect of Police on 26 May 1998.[19] A week later on 3 June the Justice Minister, Élisabeth Guigou, established a further commission under Jean Géronimi to investigate and report on the judicial archives,[20] and this confirmed a massive surge in Algerian deaths during September to October 1961, with about 48 of these specifically related to 17–18 October.

Again Brunet was placed on a fast track to privileged access to the legal archives by special permission (*dérogation*) granted on 29 March 1999 and in September 1999 he rushed into print with *Police contre FLN*,[21] the first investigation of 17 October to be based on the highly sensitive police and judicial archives. Brunet, a Sorbonne professor of history who claimed to bring a rigorous research methodology to bear on the complex data, would appear to have had the first and last word in reaching his conclusion that Algerian deaths numbered about thirty. However, there was considerable scepticism towards Brunet's findings, and there was a touch of bad faith in his detailed attack on the 'amateurish' and flawed nature of Einaudi's research by reference to state archives to which only he had gained privileged access.

When in 1998 the authors of this book carried out research on the 17 October for a chapter in Kenneth Mouré and Martin Alexander's *Crisis and Renewal in France*[22] it was at the time of the Papon trial which marked an explosion of interest in the events of 17 October which were becoming highly mediatized and politicized. In February 1999 Papon, then beginning a ten-year prison sentence, launched a libel action against Einaudi for claiming in *Le Monde* that the police had carried out a 'massacre' acting under the Prefect's orders. The action once again brought a stream of key witnesses to the events of 17 October into court and the full glare of media attention. The government's apparent bad faith was further revealed by disciplinary procedures taken against two senior archivists, Brigitte Laîné and Philippe Grand, for acting as witnesses in the Einaudi trial. By now the repression in Paris was the subject of an intense media debate, with an endless stream of articles and revelations. On the 19 October 1999 a number of trade union, human rights, and political organizations launched a campaigning group,

[19] The other two historians, Jean-Marc Berlière and Denis Peschanski, appear to have been granted *dérogations*, which they did not actively utilize, to give the impression of openness. Einaudi, who had been requesting such access since the 1980s, remained locked out until Dec. 2000. On the basis of this archival access, Einaudi then wrote *Octobre à Paris: Un massacre à Paris* (Paris: Fayard, 2001).

[20] 'Rapport de mission: Recensement des archives judiciaries relatives à la manifestation organisée par le FLN le 17 octobre 1961' (5 May 1999), hereafter Géronimi Report.

[21] Jean-Paul Brunet, *Police contre FLN: Le Drame d'octobre 1961* (Paris: Flammarion, 1999).

[22] Jim House and Neil MacMaster, '"*Une journée portée disparue*": The Paris Massacre of 1961 and Memory', in Kenneth Mouré and Martin S. Alexander (eds.), *Crisis and Renewal in France, 1918–1962* (Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2002), 267–90.

the association Le 17 octobre 1961 contre l'oubli, which through various publications and a website began to collect witness statements and evidence on the October massacre.[23]

During the last decade the controversial question of the scale of repression in 1961 has become increasingly politicized, one key component in the wider politics of memory concerning the Algerian War, and on the need for French society and the state to acknowledge and come to terms with the crimes committed in the bloody war of decolonization, from 'disappearances' to systematic torture and mass killings.[24] The Papon trial of 1997–8 marked a watershed: on the one hand this last of the great state trials for French crimes against the Jews significantly laid to rest what the French historian Henry Rousso has called the 'Vichy syndrome'.[25] After the Liberation the humiliation of French defeat and occupation by the Germans in 1940 was salved by mythical versions of the heroic Resistance led by the national saviour de Gaulle. This quasi-official consensus was shattered by Marcel Ophuls's documentary *The Sorrow and the Pity* (1971) and by the American historian Robert Paxton in *Vichy France* (1972)[26] which revealed significant levels of collaborationism and active French involvement in the Final Solution. Since the Dreyfus Affair in the 1890s, French political culture has divided along class, religious, and left/right ideological lines by reference to radically different interpretations of the past, forming competing myths of national identity. It took about two decades for French society to play out the 'Vichy Syndrome' and to come to terms with governmental responsibility and involvement in the Jewish Holocaust. But while the trial of Maurice Papon marked a kind of closure it simultaneously opened the door to an 'Algerian syndrome', and a new preoccupation with truth work (*travail de vérité*) on the nature of colonial repression and violence.[27]

Within this broader field of debate, the current ideological civil war (*guerre franco-française*) on the interpretation of the Algerian War and of colonialism, the 17 October 1961 has become a particularly potent symbol, a contested site as to the reality of state violence. Battle-lines are currently drawn between two blocks: on the one hand are those positioned on the 'left' (activists of Maghrebi descent commonly known as *Beurs*, former FLN militants, anti-racists, French wartime supporters of the FLN or *porteurs de valises*, Trotskyists and Communists), who in

[23] On the Association see Olivier Le Cour Grandmaison (ed.), *Le 17 octobre 1961: Un crime d'état à Paris* (Paris: La Dispute, 2001), 254–63, and Internet <*http://17octobre1961.free.fr.*>.

[24] See esp. Gilles Manceron and Hassan Remaoun, *D'une rive à l'autre: La Guerre d'Algérie de la mémoire à l'histoire* (Paris: Syros, 1993); Benjamin Stora, *La Gangrène et l'oubli: La Mémoire de la guerre d'Algérie* (Paris: La Découverte, 1992).

[25] Henry Rousso, *Le Syndrome de Vichy de 1944 à nos jours* (Paris: Seuil, 1990)—first published 1987.

[26] Robert O. Paxton, *Vichy France: Old Guard and New Order, 1940–1944* (New York: Knopf, 1972).

[27] Neil MacMaster, 'The Torture Controversy (1998–2002): Towards a "New History" of the Algerian War?', *Modern and Contemporary France*, 10/4 (2002), 449–59.

campaigning for the official recognition of a 'massacre' on 17 October seek out witness testimony and the secrets of government archives to prove that hundreds of Algerians died or disappeared on that night. In opposition to this are various conservative interests (former Gaullist ministers, retired generals, police officials, right-wing *pieds-noirs*) which deny that any such bloody repression took place and maintain that the few Algerian deaths recorded were a consequence of a legitimate defensive reaction of police officers responding to terrorist gunfire.

As so often in contemporary political 'memorial battles' over the existence of past acts of genocide or mass murder, from the Jewish Holocaust, to the Armenian Massacre, the Khmer Rouge genocide or the 'Rape of Nanking', one side tries to add weight to the scale of atrocity by proving the statistics of butchery, a maximum number of deaths, while for varying reasons opponents seek to minimize the numbers. In the well-known case of the Holocaust, revisionists have resorted to a range of strategies of denial or subversion that have required rebuttal by the most meticulous and microscopic examination of historical sources and their critical interpretation.[28] For the Algerian War as a whole, the numbers of deaths and their category (FLN or French combatants, Algerian or French civilian populations) continues to be a political bone of contention.[29]

At an early stage in the research for this book, the authors gained special and unrestricted access to the H Series, the entire archive of the Prefecture of Police (APP) for the Algerian War period, an immense volume of documents (some two hundred cartons) that at the time Rémy Valat was still cataloguing. Many journalists and political activists had eagerly anticipated that these archives, which the state and police had for so long been reluctant to disclose, would contain highly incriminating evidence of police atrocities, a kind of 'smoking gun'. However, the archives, far from offering ready answers, by their sheer volume and complexity present the historian with a difficult task of investigation and interpretation. The historian Jean-Paul Brunet notes that there are two obvious questions to answer in relation to these archives, have they been culled of incriminating documents and are they a reliable source?[30]

On the first point, a close acquaintance with the archives shows that it is unlikely that any significant expurgation of incriminating texts has taken place. Given the bureaucratic tendency of the police to type multiple copies of every document that can be located in different services of the Prefecture or the archives of various ministries, weeding of materials would have been very difficult or would have left a trace. It can be noted, for example, that the archive contains many documents that are highly damning for the Prefecture, and Papon's secret report on 17 October to the Prime Minister, which the Mandelkern Commission had reported as missing, can be readily located. Some archives, such as those of

[28] Richard J. Evans, *Telling Lies about Hitler: The Holocaust, History and the David Irving Trial* (London: Verso, 2002). [29] For a good summary see Thénault, *Histoire de la guerre*, 264–8.
[30] Brunet, *Police contre FLN*, 18.

the river police that recovered bodies from the Seine, seem to have been lost or destroyed, but it is improbable that this was the result of a deliberate act of concealment or that this source would have added much to the overall picture. The historian Jean-Marc Berlière has remarked that many journalists and anti-colonial militants have suffered from a neo-positivist delusion that somewhere, buried within secret archives, are 'smoking gun' documents that will reveal all about state crime.[31] Each time that important archives like that of the Prefecture of Police have been opened, activists—instead of subjecting these sources to painstaking historical investigation—have been disappointed and rushed ahead to campaign for the opening of further secret deposits that must contain the mythical prize.

Far more significant is Brunet's second question: it can hardly be expected that police perpetrators of criminal violence, of calculated killings and torture, would be so naïve as to leave a written record of such acts and, as is known from the army in Algeria, commands relating to such repression were usually conveyed verbally and in a coded language. Historians of the police know that services skilled in presenting prosecution evidence that will hold up to cross-examination in a court of law have all-too-frequently developed sophisticated methods for the falsification of written evidence. Brunet notes, quite correctly, that the archives are of great interest to the historian since many of the documents were for internal use and reveal a surprising amount of reliable information on the concealed workings of the Prefecture apparatus. But in our opinion Brunet goes too far in accepting the fundamental 'good faith' and integrity of the senior officers and administrators,[32] and hence tends to overlook the extent to which a systematic and almost universal process of falsification was deployed in the preparation of the documents and files relating to Algerian deaths. The historian would seem to be faced with an impenetrable thicket of deception, but one answer to this is to subject the dossiers to careful critical scrutiny—a standard methodology in all academic historical research—and in some very telling instances this does reveal how the written record was carefully and systematically falsified so as to conceal police killings.

A further line of approach is to avoid an over-dependence on police archives and to carry out research into as many different sources as possible so as to reconstruct events from the written and verbal evidence of different or opposing actors, carefully sifting out contradictions or establishing concordances. A major

[31] Jean-Marc Berlière, 'Archives de police/historiens policés?', *Revue d'histoire moderne et contemporaine*, 48/4b, (supplement 2001), 57–68.

[32] e.g. Brunet finds the evidence of the former Army Minister Pierre Messmer convincing since 'he is an honest gentleman and a trustworthy witness', while the existence of Algerian mass graves is impossible, 'since France is a democratic country which respects freedom of expression', see *Police contre FLN*, 232–3; his *Charonne: Lumières sur une tragédie* (Paris: Flammarion, 2003), 26, notes that autopsy reports at the Paris police morgue (IML) must be true because carried out by reputable senior doctors. Overall Brunet shows a faith in the veracity of state officials that he is not prepared to extend to Algerian or oppositional French witnesses.

criticism that has been made of Brunet is that he has relied almost uniquely on evidence from 'one side', police or state archives and interviews with former police officers, and entirely neglected the rich body of evidence provided by the FLN archives or the oral testimony of Algerians or French supporters of the FLN (*porteurs de valises*).[33] Brunet for example, in his rush to get into print, has failed to make use of the eighty handwritten and detailed Algerian eyewitness accounts of 17 October that were readily available in the police archives following their seizure on 9 November 1961. He also tends to infer that oral history constitutes a lesser order of 'truth' than the written document, although this type of source simply requires its own well-recognized methodology. Indeed, for this kind of event, the close correlation of oral and documentary sources produces the richest and most interesting interpretations. This is why our interdisciplinary approach, involving political science and sociology (sociology of memory, and of migration) as well as political and social history, has been to carry out research into as wide a range of sources as possible, involving work in many different archive centres. In addition, we have studied photographs, films, tracts, testimonies, and literature. While making no claim to being exhaustive, or of course in any way definitive, our long immersion in the archives as well as extensive reading of newspapers, contemporary theses, memoirs, and other secondary sources has provided us with a solid base from which to navigate our way round the shoals surrounding these controversial events.

Faced with the often conflicting and charged interpretations of 17 October, as well as access to a vast body of largely uncharted archival sources, the authors took an early decision as to how they could shape their overall project. We felt, without wishing to avoid the issue, that the ongoing over-preoccupation with 'head counts' and the statistics of death was obscuring the wider significance of the event which is of considerable historical interest and importance.[34] This was why we decided to abandon an initial working title 'Paris Massacre' for 'Paris 1961', since the term 'massacre' tended to suggest a single, explosive event in one time and place rather than, as is argued in the book, a longer cycle of violence and killings spread over weeks if not months. The term 'massacre' also threatened to divert discussion into an unprofitable semantic quarrel over definition that would perpetuate the numbers debate. We therefore argue that the hotly contested issue of numbers can be most satisfactorily resolved by an alternative approach to the evidence.

An equally complex, linked issue that our research has revealed is the extent to which the term '17 October 1961' is widely used with quite different, but

[33] Brunet claimed that he had not interviewed any Algerians since Einaudi had probably told them not to cooperate with him (*Charonne*, 61).

[34] Sylvie Thénault also emphasizes the dangers of an impoverishment of historical enquiry by a militant agenda restricted to the issues of numbers and the responsibility of Papon: 'Le Fantasme du secret autour du 17 octobre 1961', *Matériaux pour l'histoire de notre temps*, 56 (April–June 2000), 70–6.

unexplained, meanings: most frequently relating to the events of that date, but also to a longer time-scale (the demonstrations of 17 to 20 October or the dramatic phase in police repression during September and October 1961 analysed in Part I), as well as the date serving as a wider symbol of processes of colonial and state violence, racism, and occultation. Historians often have to confront problems of definition where, due to convention, a particular date in history (e.g. 14 July 1789; 13 May 1958; 9/11) refers to both a specific moment as well as to a longer and deeper crisis. This conventional usage of symbolic time may in some instances carry no difficulties, but in relation to the events of 1961 in Paris has created, and continues to create, ambiguity, confusion, and even critical misinterpretation. For example (see Chapter 6), media statements of the kind that 'two hundred Algerians were massacred on 17 October 1961' may be widely understood to mean that such fatalities occurred literally within twenty-four hours while others understand this to mean a longer, but indeterminate phase of killings. Researchers since the 1980s have slowly become aware of the wider time-scale of violence in the autumn of 1961, and the deeper causalities at work, but this more sophisticated analysis continues to be blunted by a failure to clarify terminology and the different meanings of '17 October 1961' being deployed. On occasions an *implicit* knowledge of this issue can be detected, as in the shift between Einaudi's first study of 1991, *La Bataille de Paris: 17 octobre 1961*, and his second book in 2001, *Octobre 1961: Un massacre à Paris*, but ambiguities remain in the body of Einaudi's second text.

As stated, the revised choice of title *Paris 1961* partly signals the need for a longer time-scale in our attempt to escape from the reification of '17 October', but within the body of the textual analysis an ideal solution would be to deploy a more precise terminology. In reality, this has not always been possible since the term '17 October 1961' has now become generalized, so embedded within media and political debates that it cannot be dislodged. However, while there can be no ready solution, the most important matter is that historians be aware of the issue and constantly address it. In this study, we have tried to be as explicit as possible and address these complex issues where relevant. Chapter 6 therefore examines debates over the numbers and time sequence of police killings of Algerians, and Chapters 11 and 12 analyse similar tensions and problems within subsequent memorial discourses on 17 October. For purposes of clarity, our own specific analysis addresses the issues of dates and terms throughout, where relevant, by looking at the specific contexts in which the terms are used. To summarize thus far, our main concern has therefore been to move beyond this narrow focus on the date 17 October 1961 by providing a wider contextualization of the repression and this has resulted in a two-part structure to the book, each with its own introductory section, and an authorial division of labour.

One of the authors, Neil MacMaster, during his research for an earlier book on the history of Algerian migration to France, had become interested in the way in which specialist policing units had as early as the inter-war period imported

colonial techniques into Paris in order to gather intelligence on the Algerian nationalist movement.[35] It seemed highly likely, as it did to some contemporaries, that the peculiar ferocity and forms of police repression could be explained by this colonialist background. The newly opened archives of the Prefecture of Police proved to be rich in materials on the close linkages between surveillance in Algeria and Morocco and police operations in the slums and shanty towns of Paris. Part I argues that the extraordinary levels of police violence reached in October 1961 can be best understood as the culmination of a long cycle of colonial repression and the introduction of forms of state terror, which would normally be circumscribed to military theatres of operation in North Africa, into the metropolitan capital. The massacre is not viewed as a one-off event, a momentary but bloody loss of police control in the heat of the moment, but rather as the apex of a long phase of brutal repression that was organized at the highest levels of the French state.

FROM EVENT TO MEMORY

Just as Part I 'stretches' the event by going backwards to understand the genealogy of repression, so Part II 'stretches' the event by returning to the pre-17 October context to better understand the levels of protests after 17 October, the forms these took, and study for whom, and why, the repression would constitute a memorable event. The complex way in which the parties of the left, trade unions, student, and opposition movements responded to the events must be understood in relation to the long-term political evolution of these movements, their position on the question of Algerian independence, and their embedded patterns of reactions to state repression of Algerian nationalism. The analysis then looks ahead, to examine the subsequent months during which 17 October, for a wide variety of reasons, largely disappeared from public visibility in France, despite the fact that immediately following this violent repression the Gaullist government was faced with a significant challenge from the media, trade unionists, anti-war campaigners, and limited sections of the public. Building on Jim House's interest in the history of anti-racism, social memories, and post-colonial migration,[36] Part II explains how and why such a remarkable apparent disappearance could occur and then, after two decades, give way to a process of memory recovery, commemoration, and demands for symbolic reparations. These two key research questions, linking event and memory, are therefore not discrete. Political developments, and power relations during the period 1961–2 in particular, informed the way in which all participants in the events of 17 October view(ed) this past in the reconfigured context of post-colonial France and Algeria.

[35] Neil MacMaster, *Colonial Migrants and Racism: Algerians in France, 1900–62* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1997), 153–71, 196–7.

[36] Jim House, 'Antiracism and Antiracist Discourse in France from 1900 to the Present Day', Ph.D. thesis (University of Leeds, 1997).

Stemming from these observations, one key question has been to examine the diverse impact of the 17 October events and analyse why protest reactions following 17 October took the form and nature they did. Attempting to answer this question also involves a longer-term historical analysis of the 'social constructions of indifference'[37] towards the plight of Algerians within French society and the attendant marginalization of the various opposition groups who campaigned against state violence and for an end to the war. This approach arguably makes the reactions after 17 October 'readable' within a set of ongoing political tensions that require careful explanation. However, one problem is that historians have previously seldom focused on such issues, since, as we have just seen, they were often more concerned by the debate about the numbers of dead and the nature of the repressive apparatus.[38] The attitude of the mainstream left (or indeed wider metropolitan public opinion) in relation to repression has never been a central question for academic research.[39]

The question of the scale and nature of responses to the 17 October killings begs the role of the French Communist Party (PCF) in its suburban Paris power bases. The PCF and the trade unions were the only organizations capable of encouraging, coordinating, and leading a mass response after 17 October, hence the attention paid to them in this study. However, the role of the PCF during the war continues to be extremely controversial. Already tense before the Algerian War, relations between Algerian nationalism and the mainstream (Communist and Socialist) left became more fraught during the war as the ascendancy of the FLN placed the left collectively in an awkward position, caught between professions of international solidarity on the one hand and the realities of French left-wing colonial nationalism on the other.[40] French anti-colonial activists who experienced or witnessed police repression on 17 October were often dissident Communists. These activists continue to express deep unhappiness and bitterness with the PCF (and the mainstream left more generally) that they view as having betrayed its internationalist goals.[41]

Just as the war was part of a narrative of decolonization, it occurred during the cold war that structured the French political landscape and which split the left into Communist and non-Communist poles, with further tensions within each pole and within each organization, resulting in a fragmentation of the left. These fissures rendered unitary action extremely problematical on questions other

[37] Ronald L. Cohen, 'Silencing Objections: Social Constructions of Indifference', *Journal of Human Rights*, 1/2 (June 2002), 187–206.

[38] Linda Amiri's recent work adopts a wider perspective, see *Les Fantômes du 17 octobre* (Paris: Éditions Mémoire-Génériques, 2001) and *La Bataille de France: La guerre d'Algérie en Métropole* (Paris: Laffont, 2004).

[39] See however Jean-Pierre Rioux (ed.), *La Guerre d'Algérie et les Français* (Paris: Fayard, 1993).

[40] See Danièle Joly, *The French Communist Party and the Algerian War* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1991).

[41] See Martin Evans, *The Memory of Resistance: French Opposition to the Algerian War* (Oxford: Berg, 1997).

than a defence of the Republic under the banner of anti-fascism. The Algerian War in this respect merely reconfigures these inherited cold war tensions whose influences many historians of the war in metropolitan France arguably often underestimate. The registers of anti-fascism, anti-racism, and humanitarianism, and the theme of 'Peace' in Algeria (as opposed to 'Independence'), were constant fall-back solutions of the left during the period 1961–2 that either masked or displaced the political demands Algerians were making for independence.[42] This landscape on the mainstream left further isolated the more radical anti-colonial groups, movements, and campaigns against state repression which were often themselves subject to internal division and ambivalence over FLN violence. It was in this context that the repressive policing system was able to develop, not unchallenged, but without those challenges causing Papon or the government serious worry until after 17 October.

These conflicts and tensions lead to bitter recriminations within the left following the 17 October violence. Some, more militant writing about 17 October may therefore have served—whether intentionally or not—to minimize the extent of protests following 17 October, caught in an approach that was almost as denunciatory toward the mainstream left as it was toward the French state. Within anti-colonial discourses, the mass response to the killings of eight (later nine) anti-fascist Communist activists or sympathizers by the police at the Charonne Métro station on 8 February 1962 serves as an important counterpoint to the much smaller scale responses after 17 October.[43] Part II also re-examines the transformations in the French political landscape during the intervening five-month period to better assess the extent to which Charonne reinforced the virtual disappearance in France from public visibility of the 17 October events.

Analysing such highly sensitive and polemical events necessitated attentive reading of the national and Paris region trade union archives of the Communist CGT (Confédération générale du travail) and moderate CFTC (Confédération française des travailleurs chrétiens). These sources provide much new evidence of the forms and nature of responses to repression before and after 17 October, as do the archives of humanitarian organizations such as the CIMADE (Comité inter-mouvements auprès des évacués). Material in the police archives meticulously records the work stoppages, meetings, petitions, protest letters, and other acts of micro-resistance by French people aware of anti-Algerian violence throughout the period. In addition, and of particular importance in gaining a 'deeper' understanding of the war, is the recourse to oral testimonies gleaned through semi-directive interviews with many actors of the time whose reflections help transmit the diverse lived experiences of the war. Interviewees included rank-and-file

[42] See Laure Pitti, 'Ouvriers algériens à Renault-Billancourt de la guerre d'Algérie aux grèves d'OS des années 1970. Contribution à l'histoire sociale et politique des ouvriers étrangers en France', Ph.D. thesis (Université de Paris-VIII, 2002).

[43] See Étienne Balibar, *Les Frontières de la démocratie* (Paris: La Découverte, 1992), ch. 1 'De Charonne à Vitry' (first published 1981).

members of the French FLN Federation (FF-FLN), FLN cadres, members of French anti-war and anti-torture groups and humanitarian organizations, dissident Communists, and some French supporters of the FLN who witnessed or participated in the 17 October demonstrations.

As the focus shifts from the events to their complex memorial afterlives, Part II grounds the analysis of memory within the changing political, social, and cultural contexts since 1961, and probes the lengthy period during which the 'space' for public memories of the 17 October events remained highly constricted. Here, French official silence through negation, amnesty policy, and censorship, Communist championing of Charonne, and Algerian silencing—followed by the official commemorations of 17 October to fit the FLN's political agenda after 1968—all played their part in marginalizing those memories of 17 October that did exist.

However, taking the construction of silence as an object of study posed its own problems of sources. Evidence was highly dispersed, often in militant publications that were difficult to obtain. Until the 1980s, the war in its entirety attracted little academic attention in France, and very few oral history and immigration studies had been interested in examining Algerians' wartime experiences.[44] Analysts of 17 October, when they mentioned the period between 1961 and the partial resurgence of the early 1980s, deplored the earlier silence but did not seek to investigate its contours in any depth. Of particular complexity were the attitudes of Algerian former demonstrators on 17 October, almost all of whom retreated into a strategic silence for several decades due to the politically 'illegitimate' contexts in both Algeria and France to hear what they had to say. In addition to the activist and war memories, the specificities of migrant memories must also be addressed to understand the individual attitudes towards an often painful past, the complex links between individual and social memories, and, crucially, the conditions of possibility enabling or disenabling public memory at given moments. Again, oral sources were important: Jim House interviewed former 17 October demonstrators and residents of shanty-towns, not only for their direct experiences of the October events, but more crucially in this context, as to the reasons for their own silence regarding 17 October during the period until the 1980s or 1990s. This allowed interviewees to objectify their own memorial strategies, and helped the historian comprehend the memorial dynamics within Algerian migrant families and networks in France, another area that few studies approached until recently.[45] Interviews with memory activists and researchers complemented this approach.

[44] On the way in which immigration in France was seldom of interest to historians before the 1980s, see Gérard Noiriel, *Le Creuset français: Histoire de l'immigration XIXè–XXè siècle* (Paris: Seuil, 1988).

[45] David Lepoutre and Isabelle Cannoodt, *Souvenirs de familles immigrées* (Paris: Odile Jacob, 2005); Aïssa Kadri and Gérard Prévost (eds.), *Mémoires algériennes* (Paris: Syllepse, 2004). The Introduction to Part II contains a conceptual discussion on memory.

The third central question this study seeks to answer regards how and why the memories of 17 October reinvested French society from the 1980s onwards, often as part of the wider 'memory battles' over the Algerian War. One key explanatory factor lies with the concerns of activists of Algerian origin, many of whose parents demonstrated on 17 October. These descendants of Algerians often came across 17 October via the resilient counter-memories of French former anti-colonial activists rather than memory transmission within their own Algerian families. These newer generations of activists of Algerian descent then reinvested novel symbolic meanings in 17 October, having decided that the deliberate cultivation of memory was necessary in the face of the non-transmission within Algerian families, communities, and French society more widely. These activists drew analogies between the disturbing levels of racist violence and attitudes faced by Algerians in 1961 and what they experienced as members of racialized post-colonial groups in the 1980s and 1990s. Harnessing the case of 17 October to anti-racist campaigns and demands for justice, accountability, and the right to memory, these activists brought about a memorial reconfiguration of the events of 17 October.

Studying the conditions of possibility for the transmission and reception of such memories, alongside their content and shifting symbolic meanings, this analysis underlines the multi-generational aspects of the memories of 17 October, the Franco-Algerian spaces in which they operate, and their mobilization within social movements for symbolic justice. We know that the official concealment of abuses, precisely because it leaves open the question of their number, and hides official responsibility, perpetuates in victim groups a desire for truth and justice that may well resurface as different social, political, and cultural conditions enable greater openness, reflection, investigation, and campaigning. In turn, such campaigning and visibility provided a more sympathetic and reassuring framework in which Algerians and former French witnesses to 17 October and earlier state violence could speak out and, crucially, be believed. The analyst of these developments—in particular those of the 1990s—is faced not with a faint memorial trace that needs to be painstakingly recovered, as for the period 1961–80, but with a literal embarrassment of riches across printed sources, documentary, written and oral testimony and fiction, as memory work created significant momentum. This testifies to the remarkable way in which 17 October has moved from the outermost margins of the French political imaginary to come to occupy an important if not central role in discussions of post-colonial France. 17 October thus also represents an intriguing case study into counter-memories and their mobilization by racialized counter-cultures and their supporters.

However, as this Introduction has already indicated, the memories of 17 October have to be understood in relation to those of the Algerian War and how both Algerian and French societies have dealt—or have not dealt—with the war's many other legacies. These debates often share a particular 'grammar' or 'metalanguage'

of accusation, counter-accusation, assertion, and denial.[46] The war was not a simple conflict between the FLN and the French state: it was a conflict between the FLN, its supporters, and the French state; between the FLN and its rival the MNA; between *harkis* and FLN supporters; between the GPRA and elements of the Algerian nationalist armed forces, the ALN (Armée de libération nationale); between the OAS, the French state, and the French left. In addition, the war engendered many tensions between the PCF and the anti-colonialist and far left, and cut across many other families, groups, political parties, and institutions. Few, if any, of these tensions were resolved by the end of the war, and some only emerged or came to a head in 1962. This study therefore traces the formation of key aspects of the Franco-Algerian post-colonial condition and analyses its historical, cultural, and social dimensions experienced, in albeit highly differentiated ways, by all social and political actors, although perhaps by some more palpably than others.

The newer memory activism that had emerged regarding 17 October in the 1980s found itself within this wider polemical field. After 1962, various groups such as the *pieds-noirs*, feeling aggrieved at the French state's actions, formed highly structured, cohesive identities, as did, in their respective ways, the *Algérie française* lobby within a renascent far right, the *harkis* in the 1970s[47] and, later, the French conscript soldiers (*appelés*).[48] As is now often observed, the history of the memories of the Algerian War in France has remained that of an impossible collective memory at the French national level.[49] Only in 1999 did the French National Assembly officially recognize that a war situation had existed in Algeria. On the contrary, in Algeria, the problem, from the point of view of many within Algerian civil society, was not so much that the war/revolution was not discussed, but the way the ruling FLN mobilized it for political purposes.[50]

These conflictual relationships with the past in both countries, because never resolved, have continued at a low level throughout the period since 1962, flaring at specific moments. The history of the emergence into the public sphere of the memories of 17 October 1961 in France is almost paradigmatic in this respect. Today 17 October has become a key symbol in a much broader battle in French society, a kind of 'Algeria syndrome', being waged over the recognition or occultation of France's historic role in one of the bloodiest of colonial wars.[51] While the

[46] See Sandrine Lefranc, *Politiques du pardon* (Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 2002).

[47] On the *pieds-noirs*, see Clarisse Buono, *Pieds-noirs de père en fils* (Paris: Balland, 2004). On the *harkis*, see Mohand Hamoumou, 'L'Histoire des harkis et Français musulmans: La Fin d'un tabou?', in Mohammed Harbi and Benjamin Stora (eds.), *La Guerre d'Algérie: 1954–2004, la fin de l'amnésie* (Paris: Robert Laffont, 2004).

[48] On former conscript soldiers, see Claire Mauss-Copeaux, *Appelés en Algérie: La Parole confisquée* (Paris: Hachette, 1998).

[49] Jean-Pierre Rioux, 'La Flamme et les bûchers', in Rioux (ed.), *La Guerre d'Algérie et les Français*.

[50] See Stora, *La Gangrène*.

[51] See Henry Rousso, 'Les Raisins verts de la guerre d'Algérie', in Yves Michaud (ed.), *La Guerre d'Algérie (1954–1962)* (Paris: Odile Jacob, 2004), 127–51.

specific events of 17 October remain a central concern of the book, at the same time an exploration of the deeper roots of the massacre provide a point of entry into how the terminal crisis of colonialism was played out, rather unexpectedly, in the streets of a city that stands as a symbol of European enlightenment and civilization. Simultaneously, this book analyses how 17 October, after a lengthy period of relative silence, became established as one of those key historic events or moments in relation to which contemporary French society seeks to define its central values and identity.

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I

COLONIAL VIOLENCE AND STATE TERROR

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Introduction to Part I

One of the central problems that is explored in Part I is how and why particular forms of state repression and counter-insurgency which were developed in colonial North Africa were imported and adapted to the conditions existing in metropolitan France.

The post-Second World War era was one in which European empires faced a deepening crisis of decolonization as nationalist movements gathered strength and turned to large-scale armed insurrection. Between 1945 and 1962 Britain, France, Belgium, the Netherlands, and Portugal were confronted with colonial wars in Malaya, Indonesia, Egypt, Oman, Cyprus, Madagascar, Vietnam, Kenya, the Congo, Angola, Mozambique, Tunisia, Morocco, and elsewhere.[1] Although the crisis of empire did impact on domestic European politics, to a significant extent European electorates were insulated from the brutal reality of colonial wars fought in distant lands. Soldiers departed, largely unheralded, from docks and airfields to fight in unknown parts of Asia and Africa and public opinion showed relatively little concern for the impact of 'dirty' colonial wars and the often violent methods which they used against both insurgents and civilian populations. However, the Algerian War of Independence (1954–62) was unique, an exception to the exogenous nature of colonial warfare, in the fact that conflict spilt over directly into the metropolitan heartland, an exemplary case of the empire striking back. Fighting between the *moudjahidîn*, the armed combatants of the Front de libération nationale (FLN), and the security forces took place not only in the Casbah of Algiers, but also in the streets of Paris.

In part, this unusual penetration of colonial violence into the imperial heartland was due to geographical factors: the Mediterranean sea was often likened by contemporaries to the River Seine separating the two banks of Paris, and throughout the conflict there was a constant daily circulation of government ministers, military personnel, businessmen, journalists, and others between the two shores of a single Franco-Algerian space. Events in Algeria had an immediacy quite unlike Indo-China or Madagascar, and government ministers and generals would frequently fly to meetings in Algiers or military fields of operation and return to their Paris office the same day. But the most crucial factor in the imbrication of colonial warfare with the daily life of metropolitan France arose from the presence of 350,000 Algerian migrant workers, at the time the biggest 'colonial' presence inside Europe. The émigré community, effectively organized by the

[1] Springhall, *Decolonization since 1945*.

FLN Fédération de France,[2] became fully engaged in the struggle for independence, both by raising huge amounts of money to finance the war in Algeria and also by opening a 'second front' from August 1958 involving the sabotage of strategic targets and the assassination of military and police personnel. Never before or since, with the exception of the IRA bombing campaign in London, has a colonial war of independence been fought by urban guerrillas or 'terrorists' within the imperial capital. The Paris massacre of 17 October can best be understood against the background of this wider process of violent nationalist struggle on the metropolitan terrain.

The French state faced a number of major problems in its battle against the nationalists in Paris. The French police found it very difficult to penetrate the highly sophisticated clandestine networks of the FLN and militants were not only able to find support within the wider Algerian community (safe-houses, couriers, look-outs) but also to find protective anonymity within a sprawling city of seven million inhabitants. The French state had a long experience of policing nationalist movements and terrorism in the urban centres of Tunisia, Morocco, and Algeria and inevitably it turned to the counter-insurgency expertise of the army and police in the French North African colonies when combating the FLN in Paris.

As Chapter 1 shows, a particularly important part was played in this process by Maurice Papon. During his career as a senior administrator within the prefectoral corps between 1940 and 1962 Papon constantly moved between postings in Algeria, Morocco, and Paris and by the time he was appointed Prefect of Police in March 1958 he was able to apply his considerable knowledge of colonial repressive techniques to the fight against the FLN in Paris. However, while Chapter 1 is focused on Papon, this is not only because of his pre-eminent role in policing the capital but also because his career and core ideological beliefs were representative or typical of a whole generation of government ministers, senior civil servants, army commanders, prefects, and politicians that sought to resolve the Algerian War through deepening repression rather than political negotiation. This die-hard grouping, that became entrenched in the last years of the Fourth Republic, was inspired by the doctrine of *guerre révolutionnaire* or revolutionary warfare, an apocalyptic world view that perceived Western civilization as under siege from global Communism that was prepared to harness the elemental force of 'race wars', the discontents of 'inferior' peoples undergoing rapid demographic growth and deepening impoverishment, by channelling their energies into new forms of revolutionary guerrilla warfare and terrorism. It was the perceived deadly and terminal nature of this challenge to the West that legitimated an abandonment of the normal rules of domestic and international law: higher values could only be

[2] The FLN Fédération de France extended beyond the borders of France into the Algerian community in Belgium, Germany, and Switzerland and was directed, from early 1958 to 1962, by a Comité fédéral of five members located in West Germany.

saved, in the desperation of the final hour, by recourse to exceptional forms of counter-violence.

However, the introduction of colonial techniques into France proved to be far from easy. Under the Special Powers Act of 16 March 1956 the Paris government and its delegate in Algiers, the Gouvernement général,[3] were granted exceptional authority to introduce any measures they wished to combat the FLN, and this opened the way to the transfer of police and civil functions to the army, a dangerous concentration of power that slid towards a quasi-fascist, militarized regime. While historians have studied in close detail the processes at work inside Algeria, the vast scale of repression, and abuse of basic human rights, less is known about how colonial forms of counter-insurgency, and the legal and administrative apparatuses which made them possible, were introduced into mainland France. Many contemporaries noted a dangerous 'Algerianization' or 'gangrene' infection of the French state and society. The racist and dehumanized view of indigenous people that was deeply entrenched in the colonial order and which spiralled into a vast apparatus of extraordinary brutality during the terminal crisis of decolonization appeared to lie beyond the control of parliament and the judiciary, and threatened to pass like a virus over the Mediterranean and corrupt a 'pure' Republican order that was perceived as the guardian of universal human rights and the traditions of 1789. It was feared, for example, that the two million young males who served as regulars or conscripts in Algeria would be deeply scarred by the endemic racism, violence, and torture of colonial warfare, creating a lost generation of French youth that on its demobilization would profoundly corrupt the future political and social order.

Underlying the fears of 'Algerianization' can be detected an implicit model of dual rights: forms of political control and repression that might be relatively tolerated in the colonies would be unacceptable on metropolitan soil where the hallowed Republican tradition respected universal rights. Although legally Algeria was defined as French soil and the nine million Muslims enjoyed full rights as citizens, in reality they were dominated by one million European settlers, denied equal political representation, and faced deeply entrenched discrimination, racism, and an apparatus of police and judicial repression. In general French public opinion assumed that differential rights between the superior European and the inferior 'native' were acceptable: the 'civilizing mission' dictated that enlightened French masters could legitimately subject 'backward' peoples to a firm paternalist regime that knew what was in their best interest and could ensure their progress to a better future. But while such tolerance of differential rights was accepted by many in relation to distant Africa, a tolerance that could slide dangerously into acquiescent silence in relation to military

[3] The Gouvernement général administered Algeria from a huge ministerial building in central Algiers.

violence, a similar 'lower order' of rights would be regarded as unacceptable if deployed in metropolitan France, the homeland of liberty, equality, and fraternity. Crimes against humanity were ambiguously viewed as worse or more shocking in France than they would be in the colony.

This meant that there existed strong political barriers to the importation of colonial techniques of policing into metropolitan France. Nonetheless, as Chapters 2 and 3 show, the Prefect of Police did succeed in introducing a significant body of colonial techniques and practices into Paris, despite the more robust opposition to the erosion of civil liberties. It was this slide into arbitrary arrest, systematic violence, and the weakening of the rule of law which led to a degradation of the policing environment and forms of brutality that culminated in the events of 17 October. This deterioration took place under the auspices of the infant Fifth Republic, although many contemporaries (most famously André Malraux) claimed that de Gaulle would put a rapid end to illegal violence and torture. In reality, a primary intention of de Gaulle was to reassert governmental control over the army in Algeria, not to place a brake on military actions which during 1959–60 assumed the form of vast and aggressive operations under the command of General Challe. de Gaulle was fully prepared to intensify repressive action against the FLN and generally approved of Papon's role as Prefect of Police since he was a loyal Gaullist servant firmly under the eye of the Paris government and, in particular, of the Prime Minister Michel Debré who was quite willing to resort to state terror against the Algerian nationalists. De Gaulle aimed to reverse the military appropriation of civil police powers in Algeria, but was less concerned by Papon's militarization of the Paris police. This explains the anomaly that illegal violence was given space to expand in the French capital during 1960–1, at a time when army killings and torture were being contained and reversed in Algeria.

However, Paris was not Algiers, and the constraints on state repression were far more significant in metropolitan France owing to the strength of liberal and left-wing political parties and trade unions, the churches, parliament, the press, intellectuals, and other watchdogs of Republicanism and human rights. As will be seen in Part I, Papon felt constantly frustrated by such political realities and by the failure of what he perceived to be a weak and nerveless liberal regime to clear a path to the ruthless and 'efficient' methods of counter-insurgency that he believed were required to combat terrorism. Papon was enraged by the constraint of laws, particularly those which defended civil liberties, which he saw as impeding the rapid intervention of police commando units to arrest terrorists, interrogate, gather intelligence, and 'roll up' FLN networks, and it was this that encouraged him to give the green light to irregular procedures that reached a peak in the events of 17 October.

The deterioration of policing into brutal repression was legitimated or encouraged by the theory of *guerre révolutionnaire* that became official army

doctrine and which Papon fully shared while Superprefect (IGAME)[4] in Constantine during 1956–8. According to this theory, nationalist guerrilla movements, inspired by the teachings of Mao Tse-tung, sought to impose an iron grip on entire populations through terrorism and clandestine political networks. To counter this the French army would have to develop forms of unconventional warfare and, in particular, psychological and propaganda techniques to win the battle for the 'hearts and minds' of the Algerian people, so isolating the tiny minority of terrorists from their support base. While it might have been expected that this theory would lead to actions that would have brought the full weight of repression to bear on the minority of FLN militants, while protecting the mass of Algerians who were to be nurtured, in practice army and police operations in both Algeria and Paris tended to bring a sledge-hammer approach to the situation, inflicting a generalized and indiscriminate violence on the whole population, a counter-productive strategy which drove the people into the arms of the FLN.

Some light can be shed on this anomalous behaviour by the comparative theory of state terror. French and Algerian historians have studied in great depth the roots of state violence after 1954 in the long history of the colonial system in the Maghreb, embedded and racialized practices that treated the indigenous peoples as of lesser worth and psychologically facilitated the conditions under which settlers, officials, policemen, and army officers denied them equal rights and subjected them to systematic humiliation and brutality. These processes are quite well understood but further light can be shed on the Algerian War by the comparative research of sociologists and anthropologists on state terror, the investigation of the conditions under which governments (Argentina, El Salvador, Indonesia, Guatemala, Philippines, Uganda, Brazil, South Africa) have unleashed extreme levels of violence, including massacres, mass incarceration without trial, torture, burnt earth destruction, and the operation of shadowy death squads, upon their own citizens.[5]

Although the definition of state terror is contested, in general it can be understood as an instrument of government policy for the control of the political system and of civil society within the bounds of the nation-state. Violence in numerous disguises (from massacre to 'disappearances') is not, in this perspective, the unintended by-product of military or police operations, of civilian 'co-lateral' damage or of rogue army units that may run amok in orgies of killing, but a carefully planned mode of operations approved and coordinated at the highest levels

[4] The Inspecteur général de l'administration en mission extraordinaire (IGAME), first created in France in 1948 and extended to Algeria by the decree of 18 June 1956, held special civil and military powers to administer a territory of several départements during periods of national emergency.

[5] Michael Stohl and George A. Lopez (eds.), *The State as Terrorist: The Dynamics of Governmental Violence and Repression* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1984); Jeffrey A. Sluka (ed.), *Death Squads: The Anthropology of State Terror* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2000); Bruce B. Campbell and Arthur D. Brenner (eds.), *Death Squads in Global Perspective: Murder with Deniability* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2000).

of the state (Cabinet ministers, supreme commanders), refined and diffused through specialized training centres, military academies, and joint operations. A prime objective of state terror is not only to capture, incarcerate, and physically eliminate the active members of opposition movements, be they trade unionists, left-wing militants, or nationalists, but to spread such a climate of insecurity and fear in the wider population that it will deter support for anti-government forces and de-politicize the masses, fostering a feeling of powerlessness, fatalism, and withdrawal. Such state violence is not the monopoly of totalitarian or barbarian and 'exotic' regimes, but a constant potentiality of all state systems, including liberal and democratic governments.[6] During national emergencies such as war, or a perceived or real terrorist threat to the security of government and people, liberal states may have recourse to forms of domestic repression that severely circumscribe civil liberties and may open the way to detention without trial and torture, state terror that may be tolerated by public opinion, particularly if it is thought to target an 'enemy within', aliens, urban guerrillas, and Communist subversives. Precisely such conditions developed in mainland France during the Algerian War.

A further key element in the elaboration of state terror in both Algeria and metropolitan France derived from the refusal of the French government to recognize Algerian nationalist fighters as legitimate combatants. Throughout the conflict (1954–62) the French state never accepted that it was engaged in war, but rather a campaign for the 'maintenance of law and order', against insurgents who were categorized as criminal outlaws.[7] The international laws of war in force at this time, including Article 3 of the Geneva Convention of 1949, provided virtually no effective protection for citizens caught up in an internal conflict, and an attempt in an earlier draft of the Convention to make it applicable to colonial conflicts had been deleted.[8] In effect this meant that Algerian combatants had none of the basic protection extended to POWs, the right to humane treatment and not to be tortured, while civilian populations were also exposed to reprisals, collective punishment, mass relocation, and other forms of state terror.[9] Since the Algerian insurrection was legally categorized by the government as a criminal conspiracy, this also meant that all military operations were, in a totally surreal way, viewed as forms of policing. This merging of army and police functions was to carry fatal consequences for repression in metropolitan France in that the police in Paris became, inversely, militarized and gangrened by the forms of policing developed by the army in Algeria.

[6] Michael Mann, *The Dark Side of Democracy: Explaining Ethnic Cleansing* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005).

[7] The French parliament only officially recognized the existence of a 'war', rather than an 'operation for the maintenance of law and order', by the law of 10 June 1999: see *Le Monde* (11 June 1999).

[8] James E. Bond, *The Rules of Riot: Internal Conflict and the Law of War* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1974), 54.

[9] Ibid., chs. 1 to 3, for a full analysis of the absence of protection in international law in the case of 'internal conflict'.

State terror, as an instrument of political control, was not restricted to instances of physical pain, incarceration, and killings, but constituted an integrated system of quasi-totalitarian proportions for the close destabilization of target populations, a goal achieved through a constant erosion of morale through economic damage (destruction of houses, crops, and livestock), dislocation of social structures, continual harassment and mass arrests, and ritual humiliation (rape, forced unveiling of Muslim women). The effectiveness of such terror was founded on a close scientific knowledge of the indigenous society, its inner structures and points of weakness, that was procured through in-depth sociological, anthropological and cultural studies. This is important to an understanding of the Paris events of 1961 since Papon introduced his own expert sociologists into the Prefecture who developed strategies that were designed to locate the soft spots of the émigré community, to so weaken morale that it would undermine nationalist support for the FLN. It is argued in Part I that the mobilization for the demonstrations of 17–20 October 1961 can best be understood within this context, as an FLN riposte to such a strategy of state terror.

In Chapter 3 particular attention is given to a major crisis within the Paris police force, one triggered by a surge in FLN assassinations of officers, that lasted from late August through to late October 1961. During this crisis elements within the police service were tipped over into a wide-scale pattern of illegal killings, of which 17 October represented the final culmination. One crucial aspect of this wave of police assassinations was that it deepened and radicalized Papon's bitter resentment at the slowness of judicial procedure, the failure of judges to impose severe penalties or to execute the 'criminals', and the extent to which due process and civil rights impeded the ability to strike fast and efficiently against known terrorists. In this situation security forces, often inspired by authoritarian and right-wing disdain for what they saw as an effete order run by 'spineless' liberals unable to face up to the harsh challenge of ruthless insurgents, the agents of international Communism, have often resorted to clandestine forms of 'expeditive justice'.[10] The Paris police archives reveal in detail how the authorities expressed a deep contempt for the rule of law, and the extent to which they were prepared to encourage and protect or 'cover' officers who followed the path towards a deepening spiral of illegal violence.

After these matters have been dealt with in Chapters 1 to 3, Chapter 4 examines the organization of the demonstrations of 17 to 20 October 1961, the police riposte, and how the complex of events unfolded. Chapter 5 investigates the significant political crisis that emerged in the wake of the massacre, and how it was that the government was able to so quickly head off this challenge and to draw an effective curtain over the events. Lastly, Chapter 6 sets out to challenge a current over-preoccupation with calculating precise figures of individual deaths on

[10] See Campbell and Brenner, *Death Squads*, 110, 182, 196–7, 210, 261.

17 October, the 'battle of numbers', by arguing that this is a futile endeavour which also serves to obfuscate an understanding of the important longer term crisis and cycle of killings that began in August 1961. The second part of the chapter identifies and analyses those elements within the security forces that were responsible for the wave of murders, and how these linked to the higher levels of government.

1

Papon and the Colonial Origins of Police Violence

In March 1958 the French government, faced with a crisis in the Paris police force, flew Maurice Papon from Algeria into the capital to provide strong leadership to the Prefecture of Police and to accelerate the battle against the Front de libération nationale. During the remaining four years of the Algerian War Papon was the architect of a novel and far-reaching police and intelligence system. The purpose of this chapter is to examine the origins of this 'Papon System' by following the career of the Prefect from Vichy through the politically unstable years of the Fourth Republic. The aim is not to provide a comprehensive biography of Papon but to take note of those key experiences through which he built up expertise in counter-insurgency and, in particular, techniques for the policing of minority populations and nationalist insurgents that he would adapt later to the Paris context. Secondly, throughout this period (*c.*1940–58), Papon shared the traditional culture of the prefectoral corps which, as loyal servants of the Republic, affected to stand independent of party politics. However, Papon was closely linked to a powerful coalition of right-wing imperialists, headed by his patron René Mayer, whose interest was to cling on to French Algeria (*Algérie française*) at all costs. Papon was not, as he has often claimed, a neutral but efficient servant of the state above the mêlée, a super-police technocrat, but a key member of a powerful North African lobby that sabotaged a peaceful resolution to the decolonization of Algeria and locked it into a cycle of deepening violence and repression. The 'Papon System' was grounded in a particular ideological vision, a virulent anti-Communist and right-wing or 'ultra' colonialist agenda that became packaged as the theory of revolutionary warfare (*guerre révolutionnaire*) and which opened the way to an authoritarian military-police regime that slid into a fatal and large-scale abuse of human rights.

Maurice Papon was born in 1910, the son of a provincial notary who achieved later success as a bottle manufacturer for the Reims champagne industry and as President of the General Council for the Seine-et-Marne department. Papon studied law, psychology, political science, and public finance at the Sorbonne, before entering the Interior Ministry in 1935 where he rose up the ranks of the prefectoral corps through the clientele system of the Radical Party and, in

particular, the patronage of Maurice Sabatier.[1] When Papon was demobilized in October 1940, after service as an intelligence officer in Syria, he was appointed by Sabatier, head of administration in the Interior Ministry, as director of his cabinet. Sabatier, a European of Algerian settler origin (*pied-noir*), had strong links to the colony for which he held direct responsibility and it was he that introduced his young protégé to North Africa by taking him on an official mission in 1941.[2] When Sabatier was appointed Regional Prefect of Aquitaine in May 1942 he took Papon with him to Bordeaux where the ambitious and energetic General Secretary ran the administration with great efficiency.

Papon has achieved notoriety for his key role in the arrest and deportation of Jews from Bordeaux, for which he was condemned in April 1998 to a ten-year prison sentence after one of the longest and mostly highly mediatized trials in French history. There exists an enormous literature on this controversial affair and it is not the aim to try and summarize this here, but rather to focus on two aspects which relate to the central concerns of this study. First, historians have failed to note that the techniques deployed by the Vichy regime to locate and identify the tens of thousands of Jews who could conceal themselves by merging into the vast, anonymous crowds of the towns and cities were similar to the methods later used to track Algerian nationalists and to locate members of the minority community embedded in the total French population. Both systems of control shared the following features:

- The creation of specialized intelligence agencies for the policing of target groups (Jews, Algerians).
- The total census of minority populations.
- Elaborate card-index files (*fichiers*) to identify and locate individuals.
- Mass round-up operations involving street-level stop-and-search checks or the surrounding and isolation of urban sectors, with house-to-house searches.
- Special police intervention units.
- Mass holding centres and camps for those rounded up, often with screening/identification units (*triage*).
- Exceptional and discriminatory legislation aimed to identify and detain minorities (night curfews, special identity cards, administrative arrest).[3]

[1] For Papon's early years see Kelly Vann, 'Papon's Transition after World War II', in R. J. Golsan (ed.), *The Papon Affair: Memory and Justice on Trial* (London: Routledge, 2000); Gérard Boulanger, *Maurice Papon: Un technocrate français dans la collaboration* (Paris: Seuil, 1994) and *Papon: Un intrus dans la République* (Paris: Seuil, 1997); Bernard Violet, *Le Dossier Papon* (Paris: Flammarion, 1997); and the legal cross-examination of Papon's curriculum vitæ during his trial, *Le Procès de Maurice Papon: Compte rendu sténographique* (Paris: Albin Michel, 1998), i. 182–203.

[2] Archives nationales, Centre des archives d'outre-mer (CAOM), 8CAB63.

[3] On Papon's elaboration of this system in Bordeaux see *Le Procès*; on Vichy see Michael R. Marrus and Robert O. Paxton, *Vichy France and the Jews* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995); Gérard Noiriel, *Les Origines républicaines de Vichy* (Paris: Hachette, 1999); René Rémond, *Le 'Fichier Juif': Rapport de la commission présidée par René Rémond au Premier ministre* (Paris: Plon, 1996).

Second, the convergence between the methods of policing Jews and Algerians was more than superficial: in many instances we find senior police officers or administrators, who during the course of their career were involved in both forms of repression, drawing on a shared body of practices. A key role was played by the Interior Ministry which constantly circulated top officials between the Maghreb and metropolitan France. In Bordeaux, Papon was closely associated with a circle of senior administrators who had significant past connections with Algeria. In addition to the *pied-noir* Sabatier, who but for his death in 1989 would have been put on trial with Papon, there was Jean Chapel who later served as Superprefect (IGAME) in Constantine; Pierre Garat, head of Jewish services, who was transferred to Algeria in 1945; Pierre Somveille, Papon's life-long right-hand man and head of cabinet who also moved to Algeria in 1945; and the *pied-noir* anti-Semite Pierre-René Gazagne. It may be the case that those who were most deeply involved with the persecution of Jews in Bordeaux (Sabatier, Papon, Garat, Gazagne) were rapidly transferred by the Interior Ministry to Algeria in 1945 to protect them from the purge and trial of Nazi collaborators.

Gazagne's career exemplifies the pattern of constant movement across the Mediterranean through which anti-Semitism and the harsh repressive traditions of colonial policing were injected into metropolitan France. Gazagne was a *pied-noir* who, after an early career as a native administrator,[4] was transferred in 1932 to Paris where he served for three years as second-in-command of the Service de surveillance, protection et d'assistance aux indigènes nord-africains (SAINA), a police unit that specialized in the repression of the early nationalist movement that emerged among the Algerian migrant workers in Paris.[5] SAINA, as we will see later, was the immediate precursor of the Service d'assistance technique aux Français musulmans d'Algérie (SAT-FMA) created by Papon in August 1958. During the early Vichy years Gazagne became director of the section of the Commissariat général aux questions juives concerned with the legal status of Jews and later in Algeria, notorious for its virulent anti-Semitism, he coordinated a repressive campaign against the Jews.[6] In June 1941 Gazagne moved to Aquitaine where, as Prefect of the Landes, he worked under Maurice Sabatier. After the Liberation Gazagne succeeded, like Papon, in reinventing himself as a Resistance hero and was appointed in March 1945 by the Interior Ministry to the influential post of general secretary to the Governor General of Algeria.[7] Within a few weeks Gazagne came to play a crucial role in the events of Sétif that are now widely recognized as the critical turning point in the development of the insurrectionary nationalist movement that culminated in Algerian independence.

[4] Alain de Sérigny, *Échos d'Alger: Le Commencement de la fin* (Paris: Presses de la Cité, 1972), i. 263.

[5] Boulanger, *Maurice Papon*, 103, 274; on the SAINA see N. MacMaster, *Colonial Migrants,* ch. 9.

[6] Annie Rey-Goldzeiguer, *Aux origines de la Guerre d'Algérie, 1940–1945: De Mers-el-Kébir aux massacres du Nord-Constantinois* (Paris: La Découverte, 2002), 40.

[7] Boulanger, *Papon: Un intrus*, 262.

The Allied landing in Algeria in November 1942 had given a radical impetus to the nationalist struggle against a background of deepening social, economic, and political crisis.[8] By early 1945 Algeria was in political turmoil and, with the imminent defeat of Nazi Germany by an Allied campaign in which many thousands of Algerians[9] had lost their lives, an almost millenarian faith swept through the native population that the occupying colonial power was about to collapse. An increasingly nervous *pied-noir* community began to arm itself to the teeth for a showdown. At this critical moment Gazagne, who had an extensive network of support among the Vichyite administrators and police of Algiers, engineered a coup, the so-called Reibell Affair, which provided an excuse for the arrest of militants and the Algerian nationalist leaders Ferhat Abbas and Messali Hadj. Gazagne, who proudly claimed that he had 'decapitated' the nationalist organization, succeeded in sabotaging any prospect of a peaceful resolution to the crisis and precipitated the events that led within days to the bloodbath of Sétif.[10] On 1 May 1945 police fired on unarmed nationalist demonstrations in Algiers and Oran, killing twelve people, and on 8 May shot and killed untold numbers of unarmed demonstrators in Sétif, Guelma, and Bône.[11] In a riposte to a peasant insurrection during which 103 Europeans were killed, the colonial regime exacted revenge and reasserted its authority by a massive and disproportionate violence: over a period of several months the police, armed forces, and civilian vigilantes killed between 15,000 and 45,000 Algerians in the North Constantine region.

Just after the vast punitive operations Papon, along with his close aide Pierre Somveille, was transferred by the Interior Ministry to Algeria with the mission to complete the pacification and stabilization of the Constantinois.[12] Papon, through these mopping-up operations, thus had a direct knowledge of the Sétif massacre, an event that was the harbinger of a pattern of mass nationalist protest and state repression throughout the 'long' Algerian War (1945–62) and which culminated in the massacre of 17 October 1961 in Paris. The events of Sétif, which began as a demonstration by unarmed Algerians, provided the most dramatic evidence of the fact that colonial authorities would respond to the political challenge of organized protest by the use of extreme levels of violence. In Sétif, as in many dozens of later demonstrations in the Maghreb and in metropolitan France, the police fired on unarmed crowds on the standard pretext of 'legitimate defence', that they had

[8] On Allied policy and the background to the Algerian crisis during and just after the Second World War see Martin Thomas, *The French North African Crisis: Colonial Breakdown and Anglo-French Relations, 1945–62* (London: Macmillan Press, 2000), ch. 1; Matthew Connelly, *A Diplomatic Revolution: Algeria's Fight for Independence and the Origins of the Post-Cold War Era* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), part 1.

[9] The official post-war designation for the nine million Arab-Berber population was 'Français musulmans d'Algérie' (FMA), but throughout the term 'Algerian' has been used, as distinct from the one million settlers of European descent, also known as *pieds-noirs*, and the Jews who held French nationality under the Crémieux decree of 1870.

[10] For a detailed analysis of the Reibell conspiracy see Rey-Goldzeiguer, *Aux origines*, ch. 11.

[11] Boucif Mekhaled, *Chroniques d'un massacre 8 Mai 1945: Sétif, Guelma, Kherrata* (Paris: Syros/Au nom de la mémoire, 1995), 117–18, 130–1, 138, 145.

[12] *Le Procès*, i. 194.

simply made a riposte to shots fired by Algerian *provocateurs*.[13] The Sétif crisis also became the pretext for the introduction of repressive measures that became standardized through to the end of the Algerian War, among them the imposition of night-time curfews in urban centres, huge police and army sweep-and-search operations, the deployment of colonial troops (Senegalese) as a punitive force, the arbitrary arrest and holding of thousands of men in prison and special detention camps, brutal interrogation and torture to force 'confessions' and identify other nationalists, and prosecution by repressive military tribunals.

The Sétif massacre also provides a dramatic illustration of the way in which the colonial authorities systematically blocked official investigation of illegal killings and concealed the huge number of deaths so that it barely registered on French public opinion. Two commissions of inquiry, one led by police commissioner Bergé,[14] the second by General Paul Tubert, were sabotaged by opposition from the colonial administration and police, and in the case of Tubert by an order from de Gaulle to abandon the inquiry immediately. Pierre-René Gazagne also penned an official report, *The Insurrection of the Constantinois (May 1945)* (*L'Émeute du Constantinois (mai 1945)*), in which he provided a tendentious and racist cover-up.[15] The exclusion of journalists from the Constantinois and the imposition of tight censorship meant that the 'events' went largely unreported in the press, while international opinion ignored an apparently minor colonial disturbance that was viewed as an internal French affair. In the rare instances in which Algerian families had the courage and means to register an official complaint with the Police judiciaire regarding murdered or disappeared relatives, the dossiers were blocked and eventually closed, just as they were to be in Paris during 1961.[16]

The events of Sétif in 1945, with which Papon was so closely associated, provided the future Prefect of Police not only with a blueprint of colonial repression, but also with the lesson of how censorship, official denial, and judicial concealment allowed the security forces to engage in a huge scale of killing with virtual impunity.

In January 1947 Papon was appointed Prefect of Corsica and, after a relatively quiet and stable period on the island, he was promoted Prefect of Constantine (October 1949) through the influence of his patron René Mayer. Papon immediately began to consult Mayer, the deputy and mayor of Constantine, on key appointments (including a request for the transfer of Pierre Somveille), on the

[13] The police in North Africa regularly shot demonstrators with impunity, as during the 1948 elections when they killed seven at Boghari and four in Champlain, Henri Alleg (ed.), *La Guerre d'Algérie* (Paris: Temps Actuels, 1981), i. 273. In Tunisia between 28 Jan. and 1 Feb. 1952 some 200 people were killed, see Jean-Pierre Rioux, *The Fourth Republic, 1944–1958* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 212.

[14] Rey-Goldzeiguer, *Aux origines*, 269–70; Mekhaled, *Chroniques*, 206–7.

[15] Reprinted by Gazagne's associate Alain de Sérigny in *Les Échos d'Alger,* i, annex 4, 313–44.

[16] Ibid. 300–1. The Police judiciaire (PJ) carried out criminal investigations, often under orders from a magistrate, the *juge d'instruction*. With a high level of training in the penal code, they also ensured that correct procedure was followed in order to pursue a prosecution, such as placing of seals on incriminating evidence.

nationalist movement, the fixing of election candidates, and other issues relating to the political control of the huge region.[17] The powerful colonial notables Mayer, Borgeaud, and Gazagne exercised a particularly strong control over the appointment of senior police and intelligence officers throughout Algeria, a client system that served to maintain European social, political, and economic domination through an informal police-state apparatus that the Paris government was unable to control.[18]

During his first posting to Algeria (1949–51) Papon, as Prefect of Constantine, was head of administration and security in the vast eastern region which was the cradle of armed insurrection. During this period, the Algerian nationalist movement was spreading rapidly and a new generation of radicals led by Ahmed Ben Bella and Aït Ahmed, for whom Sétif marked a watershed, formed a clandestine splinter group within Messali Hadj's Mouvement pour le triomphe des libertés démocratiques (MTLD), the Organisation spéciale (OS), which began to prepare for an armed liberation. Police investigation of the OS began to uncover a well-structured cellular organization and numerous security operations took place during 1950 in the Constantinois, the most turbulent of the three Algerian regions.[19] The use of torture by the police and prison guards during this phase of repression was so widespread that the Governor General Marcel-Edmond Naegelen and his successor Roger Léonard both issued circulars forbidding such practices.[20]

PAPON'S APPRENTICESHIP TO JEAN BAYLOT (1951–1954)

In December 1951 Papon, after gaining extensive experience of colonial intelligence and policing operations against the nascent insurrectionary nationalists was promoted to the position of General Secretary to the Paris Prefect of Police, Jean Baylot. As Baylot's right-hand man Papon further honed his skills in the surveillance of the Algerian migrant community, a hot-bed of nationalist politics. Baylot, renowned for his virulent anti-Communism and 'ultra' colonialist position, a creature of the Algerian *colons* leaders, implemented a particularly harsh repression of the nationalist movement. Baylot shared a close affiliation with the Vichy right and, while persecuting Communist police officers whom he drove from the force,

[17] Archives nationales, CARAN, Fonds René Mayer 363 AP 32.

[18] Jean-Pierre Peyroulou, 'Rétablir et maintenir l'ordre colonial: La Police française et les Algériens en Algérie française de 1945 à 1962', in Mohammed Harbi and Benjamin Stora (eds.), *La Guerre d'Algérie: 1954–2004, la fin de l'amnésie* (Paris: Laffont, 2004), 103–4.

[19] Violet, *Le Dossier Papon*, 56–7; Marcel-Edmond Naegelen, *Mission en Algérie* (Paris: Flammarion, 1962), 169–78. The administrative structure of Algeria was modelled on that of metropolitan France: there existed three huge departments (Oran, Algiers, and Constantine) until the decree of 28 June 1956 subdivided these regions into twelve departments.

[20] Naegelen, *Mission en Algérie*, 176–7; Vann, 'Papon's Transition', 49, 69.

worked to rehabilitate and promote the careers of many collaborationist officers who had been purged or suspended at the Liberation. He was also patron of the extreme right-wing police commissioner Jean Dides, who since 1947 had organized a shadowy proto-fascist network within the Paris force.[21] Papon thus served as the right-hand man to a Prefect of Police who was at the core of the 'ultra party' dedicated to the defence of French colonial interests and who viewed the leading Socialist politician Pierre Mendès France as a dangerous subversive hell-bent on destroying the French empire. When Mendès France later became Prime Minister in 1954, he removed both Baylot and the reactionary Interior Minister Martinaud-Déplat, creating a venomous hatred among the Radical 'ultras' who engaged in a smear campaign, including the bizarre plot known as the Affair of the Leaks (*Affaire des fuites*), to bring down both Mendès France and Mitterrand.[22]

Baylot played a particularly prominent role in the violent repression of Algerians in Paris. After the Liberation there was a rapid increase in the number of Algerians who migrated annually to France, from 66,234 in 1947 to 159,786 in 1954. During this period, the French Federation of the MTLD was spreading its influence among the Algerian workers in the Paris region, organizing political cells, publishing newspapers, holding conferences, fighting for equality of wages and welfare rights, and participating in growing numbers in major demonstrations like that of 14 July 1951 when some 10,000 marched through Paris holding aloft the portrait of Messali Hadj.[23] From 1947 onwards the popular press engaged in a virulent racist campaign which criminalized the Algerians, spread anxiety among Parisians, and created a climate of opinion in which the police were free to engage in discriminatory, repressive street-level operations that targeted Algerian-looking men.[24]

Baylot, along with his lieutenant Papon, was at the forefront of an extremely aggressive police campaign to try and crush the nationalist movement. During 1951–3 the Prefect organized a growing volume of police operations that set out to harass Algerian workers on a daily basis (stop and search in the street, arbitrary arrest, assault, mass round-ups) and targeted the nationalist MTLD with particular ferocity with the aim of breaking up the organization. The forms of repression that were current from 1949 onwards show that Baylot was already refining and institutionalizing colonialist modes of operation well before the outbreak of the Algerian insurrection in November 1954 and a decade before the events of 1961.

[21] Philippe Bernert, *Roger Wybot et la Bataille pour la D.S.T* (Paris: Presses de la Cité, 1975), 284–94.

[22] Alexander Werth, *The Strange History of Pierre Mendès-France and the Great Conflict over French North Africa* (London: Barrie Books, 1957), 137–41.

[23] Benjamin Stora, *Ils venaient d'Algérie: L'Immigration algérienne en France, 1912–1992* (Paris: Fayard, 1992), 101–4.

[24] Henri Moscat and Marcel Péju, 'Du colonialisme au racisme: Les Nord-africains dans la Métropole', *Les Temps modernes*, 8/83 (Sept. 1952), 468–507; House, 'Antiracism and Antiracist Discourse', ch. 5, s. 2, 221–46.

On 8 December 1951 the nationalist movements, the MTLD, the Union démocratique du Manifeste algérien (UDMA), and the Islamic Association des oulémas planned a mass meeting in the Vélodrome d'Hiver to welcome the Arab delegates to the General Assembly of the UN which was then meeting in Paris. This was banned by the Prefecture and in a massive operation 3,000 armed municipal and riot police sealed off access to the Velodrome and arrested up to 15,000 Algerians who were transferred by bus to police stations and temporary holding centres in the Beaujon Hospital and the grounds of Monceau Park to be interrogated and identified. Simultaneously so-called 'cleaning' operations (*ratissages*) took place in the zones of Algerian settlement in the suburbs, especially in Gennevilliers.[25]

During 1952 levels of police violence rose to new heights: in May four Algerian demonstrators were shot dead by police in separate incidents in Paris, Charleville, Montbéliard, and Le Havre.[26] On the 14 July 1953 demonstration in Paris some 4,500 Algerians, who marched in separate ranks from the French left, were a ready target for police violence and six Algerians and one French trade unionist were shot dead when police fired directly into the crowd. An internal police investigation arrived at the customary finding that Algerian gunmen had planned to fire the first shots in order to provoke a violent police reaction.[27] Within days of the shootings Baylot and the Interior Minister Martinaud-Déplat reconstituted a specialist police unit, the old North African Brigade, that had been first established in 1925 to repress the emergent nationalist movement but which had been disbanded at the Liberation because of its violent collaborationist role in operations against the Resistance movement.[28] This unit, renamed the Brigade des agressions et violences (BAV) and recruited among Arab and Berber speaking officers, many of them *pieds-noirs*, almost immediately (23–4 July) began extremely brutal night-time operations, targeting Algerian cafés.[29] The BAV was also armed with a new type of lethal riot baton, the *bidule*, which was later to inflict fatal wounds on 17 October 1961 and at Charonne on 8 February 1962.[30]

During the two and a half years that Papon served under Baylot the Paris police was habituated to violent repressive actions against Algerians and a climate of racist brutality was deeply engrained and tolerated, if not encouraged, by the Prefect. Papon, who carried out a key apprenticeship in the repression of Algerians in Paris, admired the methods deployed by his master: 'I was able to follow with a close and attentive eye the missions and operational pressures faced by the Prefect Jean Baylot, a man of authority, courage and incisive action. Three necessary qualities for the head of the Cité.'[31]

[25] Moscat and Péju, 'Du colonialisme au racisme', 501–3.

[26] Maurice Rajsfus, *1953: Un 14 juillet sanglant* (Paris: Agnès Viénot Éditions, 2003), 41–2.

[27] Danielle Tartakowsky, 'Un 14 juillet 1953 à Paris', in Anne-Marie Pathé and Daniel Lefeuvre (eds.), *La Guerre d'Algérie au miroir des décolonisations françaises* (Société française d'histoire d'Outremer, 2000); Rajsfus, *1953*.

[28] On the North African Brigade see MacMaster, *Colonial Migrants*, 153–71, 192.

[29] Rajsfus, *1953*, 151–2.

[30] Brunet, *Charonne*, 33, 222–5.

[31] Papon, *Les Chevaux du pouvoir*, 27. The Prefecture of Police is located on the Île de la Cité.

MOROCCO AND THE CRISIS OF 1954–1955

Historical debate on the crisis in French North Africa has tended to centre on events in Algeria, where the beginning of the War of Independence was marked by an insurrection on 1 November 1954. To some extent this has diverted attention away from Morocco, where Papon was posted during 1954–5, and obscured the importance of this French protectorate in the development of methods of policing that were later introduced into Algeria and, from there, into metropolitan France. The same year (mid-1954 to mid-1955) also provides the clearest evidence of Papon's links to the Radical Party machine of René Mayer, the colonial lobby that blocked the route to peaceful decolonization.

During his short period as Prime Minister between 17 June 1954 and February 1955 Mendès France, with Mitterrand as his Interior Minister, moved rapidly to end the catastrophic war in Indo-China (armistice of 21 July 1954) and to disengage from Tunisia (Carthage Declaration, 31 July 1954). Before he could move on to address the crisis in Morocco and the insurrection in Algeria that had broken out on 1 November 1954, Mendès France was brought down by a parliamentary coup engineered by his fellow Radical deputy René Mayer.[32] In 1946 Mayer had become deputy for Constantine as well as leader of the Rassemblement des gauches républicaines which traditionally, through the strategic control of the Interior Ministry and the Prefectoral corps, had built up a clientele system through which it could manage local politics and fix elections in both France and Algeria.[33] From 1946 onwards René Mayer established a power base in Algeria among senior officials and wealthy magnates, including Senator Borgeaud, the millionaire 'uncrowned king of Algeria', and became leader of the colonial lobby in Parliament. The right wing of the Radical Party, which included a sprinkling of Petainists, virulent anti-Communists, and die-hard colonialists, funded by powerful financial and industrial interests, had every intention to eradicate the Mendèsistes who were viewed as the wreckers of empire. They feared that Morocco would be next to gain independence, leading in a domino effect to the fall of Algeria, the jewel in the imperial crown. It was in this context that the Mayer circle parachuted Papon, who had demonstrated his administrative and policing skills in Constantine and Paris, into Morocco to help crush the nationalist movement.

An important correspondence between Papon and René Mayer from 1949 to 1957, conserved in the Archives nationales, shows a very close and enduring personal relationship between the two men.[34] Mayer advanced the career of

[32] On the background to the fall of Mendès France see Rioux, *The Fourth Republic*, 225–40; Jean Lacouture, *Pierre Mendès France* (New York: Holmes & Meier, 1984), 328–41.

[33] On the Rassemblement des gauches républicaines see Richard Vinen, *Bourgeois Politics in France, 1945–1951* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 173–215.

[34] CARAN, Fonds René Mayer, 363 AP 32.

his protégé on numerous occasions, including his appointment as Prefect of Constantine (1949–51), as General Secretary to the Prefect of Police Jean Baylot (1951–4), promotion to top-ranking Prefect (*hors-classe*) (May 1953), and then with the aid of the Radical Interior Minister, Martinaud-Déplat, his move to Rabat as General Secretary to the Résident général or Governor of Morocco (1954–5).[35] In return for these favours Papon acted as Mayer's agent, supplied intelligence on the nationalist movements in Morocco and Algeria, and advised him on political developments and possible lines of action. Papon was the eyes and ears of Mayer and the Paris colonial lobby inside the most turbulent zones of insurrection, Morocco and the Constantinois, and was an integral member of the group which brought down Mendès France and provided a protective environment for the 'ultra' networks entrenched in the colonial police and administrative service which were notorious for violent repression and 'counter-terrorist' assassination.[36]

The Moroccan nationalist movement which entered into a phase of armed insurrection during 1951–5 was in advance of that in Algeria and, in this respect, the colony was also a laboratory for the development of new methods of counter-insurgency. Faced with the growing strength of the nationalist Istiqlal independence movement and its support among the famished peasantry which migrated into the huge shanty-towns of northern Morocco, French colonial interests mounted an increasingly violent offensive to destroy the nationalists, subjecting militants and trade unionists to arbitrary arrest and systematic torture. Under the emergency State of Siege basic civil liberties were suspended, nationalists were tried by military courts, the Tribunaux permanents des forces armées (TPFA), or exiled by administrative fiat into the interior, while public meetings were banned and the press gagged.[37] In response to a strike organized by the Istiqlal and trade union movement in December 1952 the police and armed forces invested the vast shanty-town of Carrières Centrales in Casablanca and killed over 300 people.[38] In August 1953 right-wing forces led by General Alphonse Juin, Georges Bidault, and René Mayer plotted the arrest and exile of the King, Sultan Sidi Mohamed ben Youssef, since he supported the independence movement.[39] The removal of

[35] Papon comments on his 'exceptional' relationship with Mayer, whom he first knew at Bordeaux in 1944, during an interview with Hubert de Beaufort, *Affaire Papon: La Contre-enquête* (Paris: François-Xavier de Guibert, 1999), 209–11.

[36] The French term *contre-terrorisme* was used in North Africa to refer to clandestine European right-wing organizations that engaged in violence against nationalists and, indiscriminately, the indigenous population: we have retained this sense in any reference to 'counter-terrorism'.

[37] Guy Delanoë, *Mémoires historiques*, ii. *La Résistance marocaine et le mouvement 'Conscience française'* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 1991), 15.

[38] Stéphane Bernard, *Le Conflit franco-marocain, 1943–1956* (Brussels: Institut de Sociologie de l'Université de Bruxelles, 1963), i. 135–48; Benjamin Stora, 'Le Maroc et les débuts de la guerre d'Algérie (1953–1956)', in Jean-Charles Jauffret and Maurice Vaïsse (eds.), *Militaires et guérilla dans la guerre d'Algérie* (Brussels: Éditions Complexe, 2001).

[39] See G. Delanoë, *Mémoires historiques*, i. *Lyautey, Juin, Mohammed V: Fin d'un protectorat* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 1988).

the Sultan, who had sacred and charismatic power for the masses, proved catastrophic, immediately unleashing a wave of armed attacks and bombings throughout Morocco.

It was against this background of deepening insurrection and instability that Papon was selected in June 1954 by the Radical party machine as General Secretary to provide backbone to the die-hard, repressive strategy of the new Résident général Francis Lacoste. The Radical parliamentary lobby led by Mayer and Martinaud-Déplat had strong links to the powerful industrial and financial interests which controlled the Moroccan economy, among them the banker Mas, a Petainist ex-collaborator who owned the key 'ultra' colonial newspapers; Philippe Boniface, head of security in Casablanca and director of numerous companies, who precipitated the 1952 massacre; and Émile Roche, another prominent Radical and head of the settler organization Présence française.[40] The big-business interest was linked to and supported by colonial police chiefs, administrators, and judges, who backed a system of extreme repression, and were also connected to the shadowy world of 'counter-terrorist' gunmen who engaged in a wave of assassinations, machine-gun attacks, and bombings of Moroccans and pro-independence Europeans. Lacoste and Papon were thus brought into Morocco by the right-wing Radical plutocracy to maintain a firm grip on the Protectorate, faced with a situation of near insurrection, and to reinforce the position of the colonial elites through repression rather than any policy of reform or concession to the nationalists. Mendès France was later to describe this reactionary block as 'those monstrous feudal interests who see no solution other than a bloody and perpetual process of repression'.[41]

Immediately on his arrival in Rabat Papon, in overall charge of the administration, worked closely with the Governor to unleash a wave of repression and moved the Protectorate towards what Daniel Rivet has termed an 'administrative dictatorship with police leanings'.[42] In August 1954, within weeks of Papon's arrival in Morocco, rioting crowds in Port Lyautey (today Kénitra) killed seven Europeans and dragged their bodies through the streets. Papon responded to this wave of turbulent nationalism by coordinating an unprecedented punitive repression. On 18 August he issued a decree (*dahir*) which gave security forces a virtual licence to shoot on sight[43] and planned a vast operation against the *medina* (native quarter) of Port Lyautey which was described in a detailed eyewitness account by the American *Time Magazine* journalist Frank White. This *ratissage* or 'cleansing' of the *medina* by security forces showed the key features of the operations which

[40] Ibid. 59, 81, 143; Delanoë, *La Résistance marocaine*, 21; A. Werth, *Mendès-France,* 69, 214.
[41] Werth, *Mendès-France*, 252.
[42] Daniel Rivet, *Le Maroc de Lyautey à Mohammed V: Le Double visage du Protectorat* (Paris: Denoël, 1999), 403.
[43] The text of the *dahir*, dated 18 Aug. 1954, is in Delanoë, *La Résistance marocaine*, 152–3.

Papon later deployed against the inhabitants of the shanty-towns of Constantine and Paris:

> The French cut off the *medina* with three cordons of troops, through which no Arab could escape. Inside the *medina* were detachments of Foreign Legionnaires, colonel infantry with tanks, barefoot Berber *goumiers,*[44] whose hatred of the Arabs is legendary, and French police from whose wrists swung weighted truncheons. Policemen working with maps, split the *medina* into half a dozen sectors. Then the legionnaires, working systematically, began breaking down the doors of every house. Once a door was smashed, in went the *goumiers* and drove out every male, except small boys. Women cried out in terror, and were beaten back with clubs or gun butts.
>
> On top of a low hill in Port Lyautey's *medina* is a dusty sheep market. Legionnaires drove the Arab men there and herded them under the muzzle of a Patton tank. A dozen policemen formed a gauntlet, six on either side. One by one, the Arabs were thrust forward, each with his hands on his head.
>
> '*Entrez-donc, Monsieur'*, said a reserve police colonel. 'The session is about to begin.' He smiled broadly, then hit a middle-aged Arab with his right fist, below the belt. As the Arab went down, the colonel kneed him in the groin. The Arab tried to get up; another cop caught him across the jaw with a club. Down went the Arab and the next cop kicked him, twice. He got up again and ran into the arms of still another policeman, who poked him into a sitting position with the muzzle of a carbine. . . . Altogether, more than 20,000 Arabs were routed out of their homes to run the gauntlet that day. Slugging, clubbing and beating that many men is an exhausting job, so the police spelled one another. They invited civilians to lend a hand, and one brute of a youngster accepted and enjoyed himself.

Some twenty men were killed during this single operation.[45] Through such *ratissages* and other punitive actions, including cutting off food supplies to shanty-towns and demolishing shacks, the police sought to impose a constant and demoralizing pressure on entire communities.[46] The tens of thousands of men who were arrested as a result of such operations were then sorted out (*triage*) using informers, and those thought to be suspects were subjected to interrogation and torture, and detained in prisons and special camps under a harsh regime.[47] By now the military tribunals were working overtime and by July 1955, when Papon returned to France, forty-three men were awaiting execution by firing squad.

[44] *Goumiers* were armed native auxiliary units.

[45] Frank White, 'Morocco: Running the Gauntlet', *Time Magazine* (23 Aug. 1954), 27.

[46] Such methods had been used in Jan. 1944 against the nationalist stronghold of Fez, which was surrounded by troops and cut off from food, water, and electricity supplies for two weeks: see Alison Baker, *Voices of Resistance: Oral Histories of Moroccan Women* (New York: State University of New York, 1998), 25, 71; the Casbah of Algiers was also blockaded by troops and electricity supplies cut off during the 1930s, see Jean-Paul Charnay, *La Vie musulmane en Algérie* (Paris: Quadrige edn., 1991), 213.

[47] On the repression see Rivet, *Le Maroc de Lyautey*, 403–8; Bernard, *Le Conflit franco-marocain*, i. 215–72; Delanoë, *La Résistance marocaine*, 77–83.

Historians of the Algerian War have placed a strong emphasis on the extent to which the theory and techniques of counter-insurgency were first developed by the French army during the war in Indo-China (1946–54) before being introduced into North Africa. However, this is to overlook the important role of Morocco as a testing ground for methods which were later deployed in Algeria and Paris. It is probable that the colonial warfare developed in Morocco since 1912, which was grounded in a close knowledge of Maghrebian social and tribal structures, brought a far more sophisticated expertise to the Algerian operations than the parachutists newly arrived from jungle warfare in Asia.

Throughout the history of nineteenth- and early twentieth-century colonialism European states utilized the social sciences (sociology, anthropology, psychology), and linguistics, as an instrument of power, a Foucauldian strategy to gain an intimate knowledge of indigenous peoples so that they could be more effectively policed and controlled. Such a science was pioneered in Morocco by army officers of the Affaires indigènes (AI)[48] who from 1955 onwards were drafted into Algeria where they came to form the backbone of the Sections administratives spécialisées (SAS), the units that set out to win over the population through economic and social reform, from the construction of schools and irrigation projects to provision of health care and employment.[49] The AI officers, following in the footsteps of Lyautey and of the Algerian local administrators of the Bureaux arabes, received an advanced training in Arabic and Berber languages, Muslim law, history, and anthropology (native customs, family and tribal structures), at the Institut des hautes études marocaines in Rabat, or the Centre des hautes études sur l'Afrique et l'Asie moderne (CHEAM) in Paris, centres which were inspired by the teaching of the famous specialist on North Africa, Robert Montagne.[50] Almost inevitably in times of deepening national rebellion, senior police and military officers called on the enormous expertise of the Native Affairs to track down and counter the armed clandestine organizations that lay concealed within the populace. This trend diverted the AI increasingly into an arm of intelligence and repressive military operations, as it did later with the SAS in Algeria.

During his period in Rabat Papon, as the head of administration, would almost certainly have been involved in the decision of December 1954 to send a team of AI officers to study the roots of rebellion in the Constantinois. In April 1955 the most reknowned of the AI specialists, General Parlange, who was personally

[48] On the *Affaires indigènes* see Robin Bidwell, *Morocco under Colonial Rule* (London: Frank Cass, 1973), ch. 9.

[49] On the SAS see Grégor Mathias, *Les Sections administratives spécialisées en Algérie: Entre idéal et réalité (1955–1962)*, (Paris: L'Harmattan, 1998); Alf Andrew Heggoy, *Insurgency and Counterinsurgency in Algeria* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1972), 188–211.

[50] On the Rabat Institut and CHEAM see Marc Meraud, *Service des Affaires indigènes du Maroc: Histoire des goums marocains* (Arceuil: La Koumia, 1990), iii. 73–6; Noara Omouri, 'Les Sections administratives spécialisées et les sciences sociales', in Jauffret and Vaïsse, *Militaires et guérilla*, 390–5. On Montagne see François Pouillon and Daniel Rivet (eds.), *La Sociologie musulmane de Robert Montagne* (Paris: Maisonneuve et Larose, 2000).

known to Papon and later served under him in Constantine, was placed in charge of a team of fifteen men from the Moroccan AI and Saharan affairs to carry out political and intelligence operations in the mountains of the Aurès. Parlange, who was the first officer to combine both military and civilian powers in the Algerian War—a fatal combination in the later descent into a militarized police state—established the model for the SAS, which was formally created by Governor Soustelle in September 1955, as well as pioneering the practice of forced relocation of peasants into military camps (*regroupements*).[51] Although resettlement is thought to have originated in the Indo-Chinese War, it also had affiliations with the operations to control and starve out rebellious Moroccan tribes led by the AI and Parlange in 1931–2.[52]

Of particular interest, in the light of the events in Paris from 1958 to 1961, is the way in which Moroccan officers of the AI began to establish a specialized knowledge that extended beyond tribal and peasant societies, the traditional locus of rebellion, to the rapidly growing urban centres in which nationalist and terrorist organizations were primarily based. In 1958 Papon flew into Paris a small team of specialist army officers whose task it was to establish a similar operation to the SAS, an organization which could, through social work, penetrate the Algerian emigrant community and gather intelligence. The leading experts on the urban sociology of the Maghreb were Commanders Cunibile and Hippolyte Berenguier, who had both served in the AI, and studied for a CHEAM diploma with Robert Montagne. Berenguier, after serving in rural sectors between 1945 and 1951, was then transferred to the department of Urban Affairs of Casablanca from 1951 to 1956 and carried out an intense investigation of the structure and demography of the rapidly expanding shanty-towns in which the nationalists had a support base.[53] As will be seen later, in Paris the sociological 'profiling' of urban populations, which involved the use of census data to map the location of particular classes and ethnic groups, provided crucial background information and intelligence for police operations.

During the year of crisis from July 1954 to July 1955 Francis Lacoste and Papon ruled the Protectorate while counter-terrorist murder squads operated with impunity against nationalists and European liberals. Papon's position in Morocco was not unlike that in Paris six years later, when the growth of the terrorist Organisation armée secrète (OAS) network was linked to the appearance of 'parallel' police operations against the FLN. The independence of the Protectorate administration from the control of Paris, combined with an 'ultra' alliance that existed between senior civil servants, police officers, and

[51] Omouri, 'Les Sections administratives', 383–4.

[52] Rivet, *Le Maroc de Lyautey*, 74.

[53] On Cunibile, see his unpubl. study 'L'Assistance technique aux Français musulmans d'Algérie à la Prefecture de Police' (30 Apr. 1961), CHEAM, no. 3511, 33–4; Berenguier had a qualification in Arab dialect and among his publications were 'Monographie d'un quartier de Casablanca: Le Derb Ghalef (1953)', *Bulletin économique et social du Protectorat* (3rd Quarter 1954) and 'Étude statistique sur les bidonvilles de l'Ouest de Casblanca' (1954).

magistrates, created a formidable façade behind which murder and torture could flourish unchecked.

In September 1954 Mendès France ordered a commission to investigate the brutal conditions in Moroccan prisons and camps. The Monguilan–Monteil report, which confirmed the use of torture, was dismissed by Lacoste as the work of 'liars' and he rejected out of hand Christian Fouchet's plan to send a further commission armed with full powers. The most chilling aspect of the deepening wave of violence was the claim made by the liberal pro-independence movement Conscience française, and the newspaper *Maroc-Presse*, to which it was closely linked, that European ultras were operating in clandestine armed groups, murdering Moroccans at random and sowing terror among the population. On the night of 18 September 1954, to give just one example, two European police officers arrested four Moroccans whom they took by jeep to an isolated location on the outskirts of Casablanca and shot: one survived and was able to identify those involved.[54] Such death-squad practices were similar to those which spread into the Parisian police force during the summer of 1961. Dr Delanoë, who was an eyewitness to violence and torture, noted 'the Lacoste-Papon team completely protected the French terrorists'.[55]

Mendès France's campaign to 'clean up' the Moroccan security forces was extended to Algeria after the rebellion of 1 November 1954. The removal of Baylot and his boss, the Interior Minister Martinaud-Déplat, had already been seen as a major rebuff to the Radical colonial magnates of French North Africa, but the Prime Minister pushed ahead to reform the corrupt Algerian police service by the decree of 20 January 1955. Through this, the colonial service would be integrated with that of metropolitan France, and some two hundred loyal officers would be transferred to Algeria to replace a core 'mafia', the agents of illegal repression and torture, who were to be sent to France where they could be isolated and contained. This concerted attempt to break the entrenched system of colonial police violence, a key instrument of the magnates who dominated the Maghreb, was not going to be tolerated by them and Henri Borgeaud threatened Mendès France in a letter of 3 January 1955. Mitterrand considered the police reform as the prime reason why René Mayer brought down the Mendès France government on 5 February 1955: 'The police constituted one of the trump cards of the Algerian lobby: threats, blackmail and violence allowed it to control officials, the press and politicians. So we struck against one of the most sensitive points of a detestable system.'[56]

The fall of Mendès France meant that the clientele system of police chiefs and intelligence officers, which operated to maintain the political and economic dominance of the colonial elites, remained intact. Under the new Prime Minister

[54] Delanoë, *La Résistance marocaine*, 55–6. [55] Ibid. 54, 137, 160–1.

[56] Institut Pierre-Mendès-France, letter from Mitterrand to Mendès France, 31 Aug. 1959, quoted in Peyroulou, 'Rétablir et maintenir', 118.

Edgar Faure an attempt was made to contain the killings by right-wing gangs in Morocco. Roger Wybot, head of the national counter-espionage agency the Direction de la surveillance du territoire (DST), was sent in March and June 1955 to investigate European terrorism but found himself spied upon and intimidated and his mission was effectively blocked by sinister forces within the police, judiciary, and civil service.[57] On 11 June 1955 Jacques Lemaigre-Dubreuil, a wealthy industrialist and politician who controlled the pro-independence *Maroc-Presse*, was murdered by professional gunmen linked to 'ultra' interests.[58] This caused an enormous shock among public opinion in France and Edgar Faure, recognizing that Lacoste was associated with a regime that seemed to tolerate assassinations and was impeding a negotiated settlement to the Moroccan crisis, seized the opportunity to recall the Governor on 19 June 1955.[59] His replacement Gilbert Grandval, who was determined to purge the Moroccan police and administration, insisted that Papon should be removed immediately,[60] and on his arrival in Rabat sacked nine heads of administration described as 'unfit to carry out any reforms', released many nationalist and trade union militants from prison, closed the internment camp of Aghbalou N'Kedrous, met with Istiqlal leaders, and suspended the chief of police Vergnolles, an instigator of the massacre of December 1952.[61]

Papon was now virtually in disgrace and without a post.[62] However, the first two months of the Guy Mollet government in early 1956 marked a radical shift towards an all-out prosecution of the Algerian War when it passed the Special Powers Act on 16 March. In this climate Papon's reputation as a ruthless and hardened opponent of North African nationalism served him well and led to his promotion to a key post as Superprefect of the Constantinois, the vast eastern region which was the epicentre of rebellion.

CONSTANTINE 1956–1958: A GARRISON TOWN AT WAR

The two year period during which Maurice Papon served as a Superprefect in Constantine coincided with a crucial repressive phase in the Algerian War. A major turning point in the shift of the colony towards an authoritarian regime, in which the army assumed civilian powers and cut itself adrift from the control of the Paris government, was marked by the Special Powers Act of 16 March 1956.

[57] Bernert, *Roger Wybot*, 353–90.

[58] William A. Hoisington, Jun., *The Assassination of Jacques Lemaigre Dubreuil: A Frenchman between France and North Africa* (London: Routledge Curzon, 2005).

[59] Delanoë, *La Résistance marocaine*, 60, 105–6.

[60] Papon during his trial tried to pass over the fact of his demotion, but details can be found in his letter to Bourgès-Maunoury, 16 Nov. 1954: CARAN Fonds René Mayer, 363 AP 32, dossier 4.

[61] Werth, *Mendès-France*, 214–17.

[62] In Nov. 1955 Papon was desperately seeking a post as Prefect of the Bas-Rhin, CARAN Fonds René Mayer, 363 AP 32, dossier 4.

Under Article 5 of this enabling Act the Mollet government was granted 'extensive powers for undertaking any exceptional measures', which it transferred to Robert Lacoste, the Resident Minister in Algiers.[63] When Papon was appointed a few weeks later as Superprefect he was in turn charged with exceptional powers that included the overall control of both the civil and military authorities.[64]

On his arrival in Constantine on 17 May Papon made a speech in which he promised to establish security in the troubled eastern region, an objective that would be achieved through a totalitarian order that, as in the ideology of fascism, would fuse the nation-people into a unity of purpose through will and struggle: 'The time is passed when civilians needed to be distinguished from the military, prefects from generals, officers from administrators. They must work together in a spirit of complete collaboration, in the spirit defined by Lyautey.'[65] In a press conference on 17 September 1957 Papon pushed the theme further, arguing for a total militarization of colonial society: 'I demand of all civilians that they behave like soldiers, since in a revolutionary war the military and civilians no longer exist. There must be only soldiers.'[66] Papon clearly relished his own military function which appealed to his authoritarian conception of the role of political elites and, as combined head of civil and military affairs, he chaired the joint meetings of generals and high-level administrators that planned so-called 'pacification' operations in the Constantinois.[67]

This is a useful point at which to examine the overall ideological position of Papon at this time, since not only was it typical of those military and government leaders who prosecuted the Algerian War under the Fourth Republic, but it also provides an important insight into the key objectives of Papon's counter-insurgency operations throughout the period 1953–62 and why it led into a deepening spiral of state terror. As the cold war deepened after 1946, and many in France feared a Communist insurrection, numerous conservatives and Socialists entertained an apocalyptic view of a global crisis in which Communism threatened to envelop and strangle the West through support for nationalist wars of liberation that would lead to the collapse of colonial empires. The outbreak of the Algerian War on 1 November 1954 appeared to be the crest of a formidable global onslaught which included the invasion of South Korea by Chinese backed forces, the humiliating rout of the French army at Dien Bien Phu in May 1954, the challenge of Nasser and Pan-Arab nationalism, and insurrections in Morocco, Tunisia, Madagascar, and French West Africa.

In May 1955 Papon read an article by his patron René Mayer on the Bandung Conference and the dangers to the West from growing Third World solidarity.

[63] On the Special Powers Act see Sylvie Thénault, *Une drôle de justice: Les Magistrats dans la guerre d'Algérie* (Paris: La Découverte, 2001), 48–9.

[64] *La Dépêche de Constantine* (4 Oct. 1956).

[65] Speech of 17 May reported in *La Dépêche de Constantine* (18 May 1956).

[66] *La Dépêche de Constantine* (19 Sept. 1957).

[67] Minutes of meeting, May or June 1957, in Claude Paillat, *Deuxième dossier secret de l'Algérie* (Paris: Presses de la Cité, 1962), 405–6.

Deeply moved by 'the grave nature of your analysis', Papon sent Mayer a copy of his own reflections on the terminal crisis of empire, 'Perspectives géopolitiques: Destin de l'Europe'.[68] He noted, 'This bitter taste that we have when we ruminate over the events of the last half-century because we still have the savour of European hegemony in our mouths.' In a scenario that has an uncanny resemblance to Samuel Huntington's thesis on the 'Clash of Civilizations', Papon predicted a future in which the West would not only be threatened by global Communism, but also by a Third World rebellion involving 'the awakening of new peoples or the arousing of ancient and sleeping peoples' and, in particular, by solidarity between Asia and Africa founded on radically different cultural and social values (Islam, Confucianism, racial unity). 'These prognostications should persuade European nations to abandon their petty quarrels and, unless they do so, they will only be left the choice of the sauce with which they will be eaten.' Matthew Connelly has argued that Papon's discourse is quite typical of a generation which entered politics in the inter-war years and for which the later rhetoric of the cold war overlaid an older geopolitical vision of global 'race war' in which 'primitive' peoples threatened white European civilization.[69]

In the 'Perspectives géopolitiques' there are indications of the Social Darwinism that was so predominant in European racism during the first third of the twentieth century: unless Europeans formed a united front in Africa, claimed Papon, their disappearance was 'etched into the evolution of the world'. There are also, scattered throughout Papon's writings, numerous statements of a conventional Orientalist nature which indicate that he viewed the Muslims or Arabs as endowed with an essential character or mind which made them particularly susceptible to violent sedition, driven as they were by irrational fanaticism. In another treatise that he sent to René Mayer, 'Le Problème tunisien: Réflexions sur la méthode' (1952), Papon argued that the best technique for governing Islamic countries was one not based on military power but an expert understanding of Muslim psychology which possessed an essential quality, 'an almost biological nature'. Muslim psychology did not follow a Cartesian rationality so Muslims were not to be controlled through reason but by manipulation of their intuitive feelings and by calming their inferiority complex towards Europeans. Muslims particularly respected and obeyed the good master, 'the calm of the strong and just and the courtesy of the gentleman'.[70] Papon had studied psychology and sociology at the Sorbonne and in 1952 there are clear indications of his penchant for a crude and behaviourist psychologizing that explains his later attraction to the theories of psychological warfare.

[68] CARAN Fonds René Mayer, 363 AP 32, dossier 4. Letter of Papon to Mayer, 31 May 1955. The 'Perspectives géopolitiques' (11 pages, typed) was written in early 1952.

[69] Matthew Connelly, 'Taking off the Cold War Lens: Visions of North–South Conflict during the Algerian War for Independence', *American Historical Review*, 105/3 (June 2000), 739–69.

[70] CARAN Fonds René Mayer, 363 AP 32, dossier 4, Papon to Mayer, 26 Dec. 1952, with *Le Problème tunisien* (typescript 12 pp.).

Papon was also influenced by the work of James Burnham, one of the most extreme right-wing theorists of the cold war, who in 1950 stated that the Third World War had already commenced and advocated a pre-emptive nuclear strike against the USSR.[71] Burnham's theory that capitalism would give way to a 'managerial revolution', in which a technocratic elite would constitute the future ruling class, appealed strongly to Papon's authoritarian personality.[72] In his 1960 essay *The Age of the Leader* (*L'Ère des responsables*) Papon, drawing on Burnham, put forward a proto-fascist model of a corporate state in which a natural and heroic leadership would stand at the helm.[73] Significantly Papon saw the role of military commanders and civilian leaders as interchangeable, a fusion that he was able to achieve in practice as Superprefect in Constantine.[74]

During the Algerian War jurists wrestled with the complex issue of the extent to which the liberal state faced with an emergency that threatened the very survival of the government and nation could suspend normal civil rights.[75] Papon used this principle of a 'higher necessity' when faced with 'chronic instability' to justify a draconian order: faced with the fine distinction between the rights of the individual and of the security of the collectivity, it was the latter that weighed most, and in an emergency the nerveless hand of the weak liberal state should give way to the authoritarian commander as the ultimate arbiter according to his 'moral conscience'.[76] Papon's writings reveal a Social Darwinian view of the nation-state in which dynamic efficiency, or degeneration and decline, stemmed from the quality of the heroic leader and global struggle. Strong leadership reinforced a positive evolution which, 'following the lead of biology, marks the life of businesses, communities or the world', and there could be no 'worthwhile or lasting civilisation without the constant progress of élites'.[77] Papon's overall ideological and political position, marked by a virulent opposition to Communism, to Marxism, and the concept of class conflict, combined with an emphasis on authoritarian leadership and a dynamic national will, as well as his corporate view of the state and a quasi-militarized civil society, would lend itself as well to Vichy as to the proto-fascistic regime that appeared in Algeria.

Papon, completely absorbed into the field of military operations in the Constantinois, readily adopted the premises of revolutionary and psychological warfare that became the official doctrine of both military and civilian leaders

[71] Stephen J. Whitfield, *The Culture of the Cold War* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 2nd edn., 1996), 5, 33–4. See also James Burnham, *The Coming Defeat of Communism* (New York: John Day, 1949); and *The Suicide of the West* (London: Cape, 1965).

[72] James Burnham, *The Managerial Revolution* (New York: John Day, 1941).

[73] Maurice Papon, *L'Ère des responsables* (Paris: Fayard, 1960).

[74] See Maurice Papon, 'La Haute-Administration et l'État', *Revue de défense nationale* (Nov. 1958), 1647.

[75] Arlette Heymann explores this issue in *Les Libertés publiques et la guerre d'Algérie* (Paris: Librairie générale de droit et de jurisprudence, 1972), esp. 9–13.

[76] Papon, 'La Haute-Administration', 1645–7; see also Papon, *Les Chevaux du pouvoir*, 376–7, where he expounds this theory and claims that, in a crisis, 'the judicial apparatus is ill-adapted to defend the State'.

[77] Papon, *L'Ère des responsables*, 49.

between 1956 and 1959. The theory of *guerre révolutionnaire* was developed mainly by army officers who had served with the professional military corps during the war in Indo-China. After the crushing defeat by the Vietminh at Dien Bien Phu (7 May 1954), and the subjection of 12,000 prisoners to techniques of torture and brainwashing, army officers sought explanations for their humiliating defeat through the study of Mao Tse-tung, unconventional guerrilla operations, and psychological warfare. The tough and war-hardened veterans of Indo-China, inspired by a virulent anti-Communism, found themselves within months transferred into North Africa where they began to apply the lessons of Asia to Algerian operations.[78] General Chassin summed up the current military feeling: 'The time has come for the free world, unless it wishes to die a violent death, to apply certain of its adversary's methods.'[79] Given the strongest support by Robert Lacoste and Maurice Bourgès-Maunoury, the army Fifth Bureau became increasingly 'intoxicated' by the vision of a crusade to save the Christian West, weakened by moral and political decay, from the global onslaught of Communism.[80]

The archives contain two significant speeches which Papon made during 1956–8 on revolutionary warfare and, although these provide a quite conventional treatment, they give an important insight into the logic of anti-terrorist strategy in both Algeria and Paris between 1956 and 1962.[81] It was crucial, argued Papon, that the civil and military authorities wake up to the fact that they now faced a totally new kind of subversive warfare, one that had been most clearly enunciated by Mao Tse-tung, and a challenge that could only be defeated by equally 'revolutionary' methods.[82] Subversive warfare was crucially not about conventional military force, about how many divisions, tanks, or planes could be deployed, but centred on a battle for the hearts and minds of the entire Algerian population.

Quite crucial to Papon's thinking was the belief that the central political ideas of the FLN, including the concept of national independence, only belonged to a minority of intellectuals or leaders and was quite alien to the mental universe of the mass of simple peasants.[83] The Algerian people was not essentially opposed to

[78] There is a considerable literature on Algeria and revolutionary warfare: an excellent account is Peter Paret, *French Revolutionary Warfare from Indochina to Algeria: The Analysis of a Political and Military Doctrine* (London: Pall Mall Press, 1964); Paul Villatoux, 'Le Colonel Lacheroy, théoricien de l'action psychologique', in Jean-Charles Jauffret (ed.), *Des hommes et des femmes en guerre d'Algérie* (Paris: Éditions Autrement, 2003); Paul and Marie-Catherine Villatoux, *La République et son armée face au 'péril subversif': Guerre et action psychologiques, 1945–1960* (Paris: Les Indes savantes, 2005).

[79] General Chassin, 10 Oct. 1954, quoted in George Armstrong Kelly, *The French Army and Empire in Crisis, 1947–1962* (Cambridge, Mass.: Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 1965), 24.

[80] Paul Villatoux and Marie-Catherine Villatoux, 'Le 5e Bureau en Algérie', in Jauffret and Vaïsse, *Militaires et guérilla*.

[81] The two speeches are: APP-HA68, 'Conférence prononcée le 19 Janvier 1957 au Cercle militaire devant les officiers de réserve de Constantine', 24 pp.; Archives service historique de l'armée de terre (SHAT), 1H 2553/D.1, a speech to the trade union congress of railway workers (CGT-FO) in Constantine, 9 Mar. 1958, 12 pp. Papon also outlined his strategy in IGAME circular no. 4510, *Directive concernant l'action politique* (4 Sept. 1956), 12 pp: CARAN Fonds René Mayer, 363 AP 32, dossier 4.

[82] Speech, 19 Jan. 1957, 2, 13.

[83] Ibid. 6–7.

France; indeed, what it most aspired to was an end to hunger and the right to freedom and this, claimed Papon, could only be achieved through a programme of economic, social, and political reform that would fully integrate all Algerians into the French nation. Given this inner 'truth', the essence of the people, the FLN—always perceived as a outside group, motivated by alien concepts—could only gain a hold over the mass through psychological action, 'totalitarian ambitions, supported and imposed by terror, crime, assassination and every form of nihilism'.[84] The key instrument through which the FLN set out to achieve its aims was the Organisation politico-administrative (OPA), a clandestine cell network that, through permeation of every level of local society, from the village to particular urban streets or housing block, could impose its insidious will through terror, threats, fines, savage punishments, and murder.

For Papon, the great mass of Algerian people, essentially simple and good at heart, only ever supported the FLN and the goals of independence under duress. A classic terrain here was the anti-French strike or demonstration through which the FLN sought to show that it carried mass support and was the sole voice and representative of the will of the people. But in reality such actions could only be a manifestation of terror since they were rejected by 'the immense majority of a weary and frightened population'.[85] Papon perceived the Algerian population as an amorphous mass, an inert body that could only be the supine object of a tug of war between a fanatical FLN minority and the French powers.

The art of controlling populations was dependent on a scientific knowledge of crowd psychology, 'a form of action based essentially on the sensibility of human beings and which must follow from a certain number of well known psychological laws'.[86] Papon appears to have been influenced, as were other proponents of *guerre révolutionnaire*, by the theories of the Russian behaviourist Serge Chakotin who analysed Hitler's techniques of propaganda and mass control in *The Rape of the Masses* (1939).[87] The mass of Algerians was not to be understood in terms of a people that might have its own political purpose, in particular a deep wish for independence, but as a raw material that was to be 'worked upon' by the French, moulded to fit the agenda of *Algérie française*. The fatal logic of Papon's position, and which remained integral to his actions in Paris in 1961, was that Algerian nationalism and the demand for independence could never be a legitimate expression of popular will, in line with the French Revolutionary tradition, but a manifestation of terrorism to which the only riposte could be counter-violence.

In principle such a theoretical perspective, which distinguished the mass of innocents from the small minority of terrorists, should have led to counter-insurgency strategies that sought to eliminate the FLN while providing protection and succour to the people. As Papon concluded in his 1957 speech, 'The aim is to

[84] Speech, 9 Mar. 1958, 4. [85] Speech, 19 Jan. 1957, 11–12. [86] Ibid. 15–16.

[87] Serge Chakotin, *The Rape of the Masses: The Psychology of Totalitarian Political Propaganda* (London: George Routledge, 1940), was translated from *Le Viol des foules*, published in Paris in 1939.

isolate the rebellion and to separate it from the masses'.[88] Papon claims that the aim of the FLN was to provoke violence from the French state in order to 'deepen the rift between the two communities'. It would therefore be counter-productive for the army to engage in actions, in 'thoughtless revenge or pointless reprisals', which alienated the innocent majority.[89] However, there was a fatal gap between this conscious recognition of the need to win hearts and minds and the brutal reality of military repression which alienated the people on a vast scale. How can this anomaly be explained?

The long history of French colonialism, particularly in Algeria, was marked by a tendency to contain any challenge or rebellion by collective punishment of the neighbouring population, regardless of whether individuals, families, or villages were implicated or not. For example, the Mokrani rebellion of 1871 and forest fires were used as a pretext to expropriate land and property from tribal societies on a vast scale.[90] Such practices, although illegal in international law, continued during the Algerian War and, in a situation in which guerrilla combattants could not be distinguished from the population into which they melded, every peasant was treated as a real or potential terrorist. On 13 May 1955 General Cherrière, commander-in-chief in Algeria, issued instructions that cleared the way for collective reprisals and on 21 May General Parlange in the Aurès-Nementcha mountains ordered that for any act of sabotage the nearest village (*douar*) would be held responsible.[91] Papon's mentor, the Interior Minister Bourgès-Maunoury, strongly supported the idea of collective responsibility to hold the population in place, including burning down villages and summary executions. On occasions the army applied the law of talion: ten Algerians were to be executed for each French soldier killed by rebels.[92] Just as Papon saw the goal of FLN terrorism was to menace entire populations, utilizing a constant pressure, a 'psychological and nervous erosion', so he believed that counter-insurgency should make use of a similar strategy.[93]

Papon noted that the first crucial step in countering the insidious FLN control of the population was to remove it from contact with the 'terrorists', and to guarantee protection, a framework in which a 'politique de contacts' would enable SAS officers to introduce reforms (schools, roads, health) and a climate of trust. In practice the social welfare functions of the SAS became inevitably perverted into an instrument of intelligence gathering and repression which destroyed the fundamental objective of reform. The writer Mouloud Feraoun asked in his journal whether 'Soldiers and officers engaged in pacification waste their time by claiming to "recapture hearts"? Re-conquest is achieved neither by lies, nor by force or trickery.'[94]

[88] Speech, 19 Jan. 1957, 22. [89] Ibid. 10–11.
[90] Charles-Robert Ageron, *Les Algériens musulmans et la France (1871–1919)* (Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 1968), i. 24–36, 116–22. [91] Jauffret, *Soldats en Algérie*, 259.
[92] Raphaëlle Branche, *La Torture et l'armée pendant la guerre d'Algérie, 1954–1962* (Paris: Gallimard, 2001), 48–9, 99. [93] Speech of 19 Jan. 1957, 9–10, 15; Speech of 9 Mar. 1958, 6.
[94] Mouloud Feraoun, *Journal 1955–1962* (Paris: Seuil, 1962, repr. 2001), 298.

The way in which reform programmes in reality slid into a vast abuse of human rights was shown most clearly by resettlement (*regroupement*), the mass displacement of the peasantry into fortified camps. Papon, who played a key role in extending this practice, in his speech to the railway union explained how resettlement was working to remove the peasantry from FLN tyranny, and cited the example of how 1,600 people in February 1958 had spontaneously rallied to the French cause and relocated, with livestock and movable property, down to a camp where the men requested arms to set up self-defence militias to combat the FLN.[95] However, Papon concealed the fact that most peasants were forced to abandon their villages: a directive on *regroupement* from the army command in Constantine noted 'Military action will be undertaken in a forceful way' and would 'punish those populations which refuse to comply with orders for resettlement by making their lives insupportable through both military and civilian actions (food supply) in the forbidden zones'.[96] In other words the peasantry was to be starved out of their mountain fastnesses, but once removed into squalid militarized camps, without access to their livestock and fields, they suffered from worse malnutrition and epidemics.[97] In a press conference on 17 September 1956 Papon boasted that 117,000 people had been resettled in the eastern region, a figure that had reached 360,000 by October 1958, or over a twelfth of the total population.[98] For the whole of Algeria by 1961 some 2,350,000 people or 26 per cent of the population had been uprooted, a radical and violent dislocation of traditional society that even Parlange came to view as a virtual scorched earth policy with catastrophic human consequences.[99] In the deep tension between the objectives of reform and repression, it was the latter that inevitably won out.

New methods of counter-insurgency were also developed in the major cities of Algeria, and it was these techniques of urban warfare that were later introduced into Paris. The best known testing ground was during the Battle of Algiers. From 19 June 1956 the FLN unleashed a wave of reprisals, including bomb attacks, on the European population of Algiers and Robert Lacoste handed over full police powers to General Massu and his paratroop regiments on 7 January 1957.[100] The leading theoreticians and advocates of revolutionary warfare, Colonels Godard, Bigeard, and Trinquier, and Captain Léger, faced with the difficult task of rapidly

[95] Speech, 9 Mar. 1958, 6–8.

[96] SHAT, 1H 2460/1, Directives corps de l'armée de Constantine, 8 June 1957.

[97] On starvation conditions see SHAT 1H2553/D1, Report of Colonel Soulage on the Camp of Boudouka, 9 July 1957.

[98] *La Dépêche de Constantine* (19 Sept. 1957); Charles-Robert Ageron, 'Une dimension de la guerre d'Algérie: Les "Regroupements" de populations', in Jauffret and Vaïsse, *Militaires et guérilla*, 334.

[99] Michel Cornaton, *Les Regroupements de la décolonisation en Algérie* (Paris: Les Éditions ouvrières, 1967), 123, 74; Pierre Bourdieu and Abdelmalek Sayad, *Le Déracinement : La Crise de l'agriculture traditionnelle en Algérie* (Paris: Minuit, 1964); Michel Rocard, *Rapport sur les camps de regroupement* (Paris: Fayard, 2003; written 1958–9).

[100] Pierre Pellissier, *La Bataille d'Alger* (Paris: Perrin, 1995); General Jacques Massu, *La Vraie Bataille d'Alger* (Paris: Plon, 1971); also the classic film of Gillo Pontecorvo, *The Battle of Algiers* (1966).

locating the bombers concealed within the population of a major city, gathered intelligence stored on an index system (*fichier*). This was then pieced together as a chart of the clandestine FLN network (*organigramme*), built up methodically through the interrogation of lower cadres and tracking up the ladder of command to the final arrest of leaders and the `decapitation' of the FLN network.[101]

Such intelligence was gathered through a variety of channels, including the use of informers and SAS officers, but two key procedures were set in place by Trinquier. First, a total census of the population was attempted, every individual being readily identified by an identity card that carried a photograph and a system of coding, equivalent to a contemporary postal code, that enabled rapid location by quarter, street, and building.[102] At the local level Algerian informers reported on the movements and location of FLN suspects. Secondly, having established a map of the population and FLN nodes, the police and military proceeded to huge sweep-and-search operations, often at night-time, in which up to 20,000 people were rounded up on a daily basis and held in camps, the Centres de tri et de transit (CTT), where specially trained teams of interrogators used every form of intimidation and torture to extract information which was then used to further build up the map of FLN networks.[103] In this system speed was of the essence: as soon as the identity and location of FLN activists were uncovered by intelligence-gathering centres commandos would be sent out to make arrests.

The term 'torture' was never used by the military but was referred to by various euphemisms or coded phrases and the practice was widely legitimated through a number of arguments, including that of necessity (the flawed 'ticking bomb' agenda), effectiveness, and the 'humane' use of methods that caused minimal harm to 'clients'. Under an order issued by Robert Lacoste on 11 April 1957 that established the CTT, the army could hold individuals by administrative 'house arrest' (*assignation à résidence*) for up to a month, incommunicado and without any legal redress or protection, a fatal period during which the military engaged in torture and summary executions, the infamous *corvée de bois*.[104] Paul Teitgen, General Secretary of the Algiers prefecture of police, resigned when he estimated that 3,024 of the 24,000 men for whom he had signed holding orders had disappeared between 8 January and September 1957.[105]

Papon constructed a similar apparatus in Constantine, an inland city of 170,000 people that was in a permanent state of siege and in which a wave of bomb or grenade attacks created continuous tension and panic, and sirens regularly sounded a state of alert.[106] To counter the terrorist attacks Papon developed

[101] On these operations see Paul-Alain Léger, *Aux Carrefours de la guerre* (Paris: Albin Michel, 1983), 215–307.

[102] Roger Trinquier, *La Guerre moderne* (Paris: Éditions de la table ronde, 1961), 53–5.

[103] Branche, *La Torture*, ch. 6.

[104] *Corvée de bois* was a code for taking groups of prisoners to isolated places to 'collect wood' or be summarily executed.

[105] Branche, *La Torture*, 120–1, 144.

[106] *La Dépêche de Constantine* (14 May, 11 June, 18 June 1956).

techniques similar to those used in Algiers including the creation of triage centres (CTT) and the deployment of intelligence officers, the sinister Détachement opérationnel de protection (DOP), who specialized in interrogation and search operations. Officers were sent to courses on the new techniques of urban warfare taught in the Centre de pacification et de contre-guerilla at Arzew.[107] A further tier was added to the fight against urban guérrillas and the FLN organization by the establishment of a new form of SAS office, the Section administrative urbaine (SAU), designed to operate in urban rather than rural communities.

The overt function of the SAU in Algiers and Constantine was for its Arab or Berber speaking officers to build bridges across to the inhabitants of the slum tenements and shanty-towns where overcrowding was primed by thousands of refugees escaping the military operations in the outback (*bled*). In Constantine the SAU was established towards the end of March 1957 and by 8 June three sections had been formed in Rhumel, Bardo, and El-Attabia, some of the most insalubrious shanty-towns. The SAU officers under the command of Colonel Gribius directed rehousing programmes, issued identity papers, gave advice on family allowances, helped fill in forms and write letters, and handed out food to the needy. However, alongside or under the cover of social work, the SAU collected data for the central files and through liaison with the intelligence services fully participated in the operations to uncover the FLN networks.[108] As in Algiers, each SAU team had its own designated sector in which it had a permanent post, and attached to this a specialist battalion (the *centaine*) which carried out any arrests. Each sector was further subdivided into blocks of houses that were under the control of smaller army units (the *trentaine*) and of Algerian informers.[109]

While Papon adopted some of the lessons of the Battle of Algiers, he also developed his own sophisticated techniques of urban counter-insurgency which he regarded as so successful that he resisted General Salan's pressure to introduce less tried-and-tested methods.[110] The most important of the new organizations which Papon devised was the Centre de renseignement et d'action (CRA), a combined police and military operations centre that provided a model that was adopted throughout Algeria as well as in the form of the Service de coordination des affaires algériennes (SCAA) which he created in Paris in late 1958. The originality of the CRA was that it integrated a whole range of agencies (an infantry battalion, gendarmes, the SAU, and civilian police) into a unified structure that centralized intelligence, synthesized the information, studied the operations that should be undertaken, and then dispatched special commandos of *harkis,*[111] CRS, and

[107] On Arzew see Heggoy, *Insurgency and Counterinsurgency*, 176–81.
[108] *La Dépêche de Constantine* (9–10 June 1957).
[109] Pierre Vidal-Naquet, *La Raison d'État* (Paris: Minuit, 1962), 285.
[110] Paillat, *Deuxième dossier*, 482–4.
[111] The *harkis* constituted indigenous units that fought with the French army: on their history and structure see Charles-Robert Ageron, 'Les Supplétifs algériens dans l'armée française pendant la guerre d'Algérie', *Vingtième siècle: Revue d'histoire*, 48 (Oct.–Dec. 1995), 3–20.

gendarmes to carry out arrests.[112] The close coordination between different agencies, the speed with which information received from suspects was processed, combined with the presence of commandos, both night and day, ready to effect further missions, marked a formidable acceleration in the battle against the FLN.

From May 1958 all those who were arrested in Constantine by the CRA were taken to the farmhouse of Améziane on the edge of town, the most terrible of all the Algerian interrogation and torture centres.[113] By February 1961 some 108,175 people had been detained in the centre of which an untold number died from torture or summary execution. Since Papon left Constantine to become Prefect of Police on 15 March 1958, it has been assumed that he had departed before the Améziane farm began to operate as a torture centre in May 1958.[114] However, this overlooks the fact that Améziane was simply an interrogation centre for the much wider operations of the CRA which had been established in Constantine from as early as the summer of 1956. During the first two years of operations (Summer 1956–May 1958) the CRA was based in the holding and *triage* centre (CTT) of Hamma, some five kilometres outside Constantine, and it was here that two sections operated, the intelligence and interrogation teams which had access to an index system and carried out torture. Papon addressed meetings of intelligence officers in Constantine in which, according to one of them, he left little doubt they were authorized 'to procede to robust interrogations and to make troublesome individuals disappear'.[115] A finesse of the CRA was that anybody released from the centre was required to sign an affidavit affirming that 'they had been well treated and not subjected to any violence', while military doctors certified that they showed no 'particular disorder'.[116]

The last aspect to be considered here in relation to repressive operations in Constantine is that of the system of justice. As Sylvie Thénault has shown in close detail, during the course of the Algerian War the normal system of relatively impartial and independent justice was increasingly subsumed to the repressive ambitions of the military, and for no region was this more the case than in the Constantinois. The Public Prosecutor for Constantine, Bertrand, had a particularly cosy relationship with the military judges in the tribunals (TPFA) which tried all major FLN suspects.[117] The Constantine TPFA, in a series of show trials, aimed to demonstrate the 'exemplary' nature of French justice through harsh sentencing of FLN activists. In March 1957, for example, twenty-one 'terrorists' were tried for attacks carried out in Constantine between 20 August and

[112] On the CRA see 'Rapport sur la Ferme Ameziane' (Feb. 1961) in Vidal-Naquet, *La Raison d'État*, 284–5; Branche, *La Torture*, 263–77.

[113] Jean-Luc Einaudi, *La Ferme Améziane: Enquête sur un centre de torture pendant la guerre d'Algérie* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 1991).

[114] During his trial in Bordeaux Papon denied any knowledge of torture and of the Améziane farm, *Le Procès*, i. 192–5.

[115] Captain Pierre-Alban Thomas, in Einaudi, *Octobre 1961*, 81; Pierre-Alban Thomas, *Les Désarrois d'un officier en Algérie* (Paris: Seuil, 2002), 85–7.

[116] Branche, *La Torture*, 268–9.

[117] Thénault, *Une drôle de justice*, 71, 121.

30 November 1955. One of the defence lawyers, Marcel Manville, after he was able to demonstrate in court that the evidence against the men he was defending had been obtained through torture, received death threats. Thirteen men were condemned to death, but after Manville returned to Paris to organize an appeal for clemency, Papon blocked his return to Constantine to see his clients waiting on death row. Although the total number who were executed remains unclear, at least eight were eventually guillotined, three on 18 March 1957, four on 8 January 1958, and one on 4 March 1958.[118]

The Constantine tribunal was by far the most severe, 41 per cent of all its sentences carried the death penalty, compared to the average of 26 per cent for Algeria. In a situation of war in which the end of conflict was likely to bring an amnesty and liberation from gaol, the guillotine, unlike a prison sentence, constituted a horribly definitive and punitive act. Hence the increasing recourse to the death penalty constituted a political act.[119] Moreover, it should be kept in mind that only a tiny percentage of those arrested in Constantine ever reached a court: the majority were rounded up in vast military operations or taken away by CRA commandos in the dead of night, interned by administrative order in the camp of Hamma, or spirited away into clandestine interrogation and torture centres. The Améziane farm simply had no recognized official existence, a kind of administrative black hole into which hundreds of people disappeared without trace.[120]

To conclude, it can be noted that the system of repression that operated in Constantine during 1956–8 was made possible through the actions of many thousands of European people, from minor police and army officers through to the hundreds of civil servants, magistrates, and prison guards who operated the administrative and legal system. While Papon was one part of this total order, at the same time, as Superprefect with overall command of both military and civilian affairs, he carried more responsibility for the situation than anyone. The structure and operations of the total system of counter-insurgency and repression were carefully concealed from the public: a high level of decentralization of operations, scattered across the huge space of colonial Algeria, combined with a deliberate kaleidoscope of constantly changing names and acronyms for sinister operations (the OR, DOP, CTT, CRA) made it difficult even for investigative journalists to form a clear picture.[121] However, Papon, along with his shadowy right-hand man Pierre Somveille, had a closer knowledge of the overall machinery of repression than almost anybody; indeed, they helped refine it on a day-to-day basis. When the duo flew from Constantine into Paris on 16 March 1958 to head the Prefecture of Police, they were in an ideal position to apply the lessons of Algeria to the French context.

[118] *La Dépêche de Constantine* (19 Mar. 1957); Einaudi, *La Bataille de Paris*, 49–50.
[119] Thénault, *Une drôle de justice*, 83, 53–4. [120] Ibid. 272.
[121] Once rumours spread about the existence of the DOP torture units the authorities camouflaged them by further decentralization into new locations and a sequence of name changes, the UOR, the L-R, etc.; see Branche, *La Torture*, 368–73.

In March 1961 during a meeting of the Paris city council which challenged Papon on the issue of violence by the *harki* forces, the Prefect replied that he was well qualified to speak on these matters since he had been Superprefect for two years in Constantine: 'I came to know there the inner workings of subversive warfare. But one of these, as used by the enemy, is clandestinity. In the absence of this, which it is impossible to practice in depth in a country such as ours where all actions must be answerable to the court of law, I think we need at least to wrap our operations with a certain discretion.'[122] This was perhaps as close as Papon ever got to publicly admitting that he was a key player in a system of repression that operated outside the rule of law. The statement is also revealing of Papon's acknowledgement that the importation of 'clandestine' methods from across the Mediterranean into a metropolitan society in which the rule of law and the protection of civil liberties still carried some force would prove extremely difficult. The following chapters go on to examine the nature of the 'discretion' with which Papon was to shroud his operations.

[122] *BMO*, Conseil général de la Seine (hereafter CGS), 17–18 Mar. 1961, 132.

2

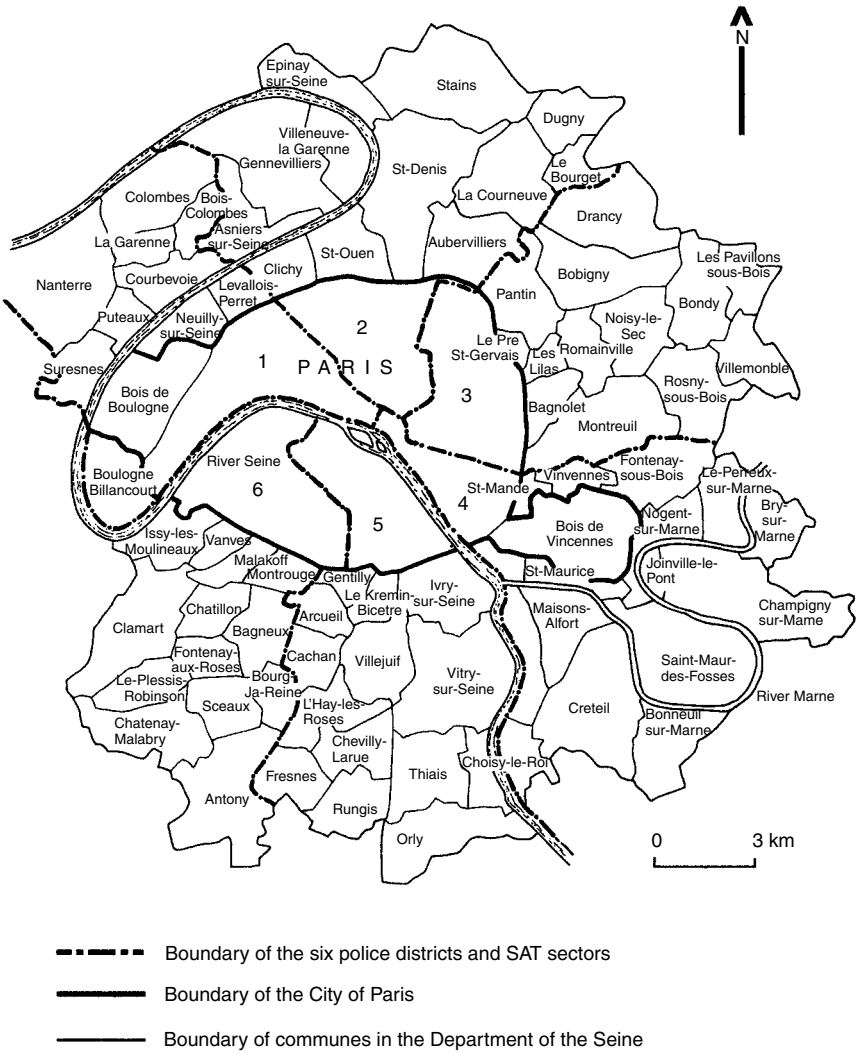
The FLN Counter-State and Police Repression, 1958–1961

In March 1958 the government of Félix Gaillard was shaken by serious unrest within the ranks of the Paris police force, a crisis that led to the removal of the Prefect of Police Lahillone and his replacement by Maurice Papon. On Thursday 13 March a mass rally to protest about failure to pay a 'danger bonus' got out of hand and some 2,000 officers, incited and led by right-wing elements, marched from the Prefecture to the National Assembly shouting, 'Dides au pouvoir!', 'Fellagas assassins!', and anti-Semitic slogans. The Palais Bourbon was invaded and the session of parliament had to be suspended. An emergency Cabinet meeting the following day appointed Papon as Prefect of Police on the recommendation of the Interior Minister, Bourgès-Maunoury.

When Papon stepped off the plane from Constantine on 15 March it was as the man of iron who could be relied upon to resolve a crisis that threatened to bring down the government.[1] The Paris press had carried rumours that Bourgès-Maunoury was proposing to appoint Papon to a powerful new post as 'Super-directeur', with the task of coordinating the fragmented police services into a more efficient instrument.[2] The crisis of 13 March 1958 thus provided the Interior Minister, a key advocate of counter-revolutionary warfare, with the opportunity to appoint his protégé to give a new impetus to the battle against the FLN in the capital. Papon almost immediately set about the complex task of reviewing police procedure and operations against the FLN within the Department (département) of the Seine (see Map 1).[3] To understand the logic of the repressive apparatus that Papon put in place during the following two years requires some background knowledge of the Algerian community and the clandestine structures of the FLN, a state-within-a-state that presented a formidable challenge to police intelligence.

[1] *Le Monde* (15, 16–17 Mar. 1958); Papon, *Les Chevaux du Pouvoir*, 20–7; APP-HA89 and HA90—Manifestation 13 mars 1958. [2] *La Dépêche de Constantine* (7–8 Jan. 1958).

[3] After 1964 the Department of the Seine was subdivided into three new departments, Seine-Saint-Denis, Val-de-Marne, and Hauts-de-Seine.



Map 1. Police districts, Paris and Department of the Seine

THE ALGERIAN 'COUNTER-STATE' IN PARIS

The Algerian immigrant community in Paris was constituted primarily of unskilled manual workers, mainly males aged from 20 to 50 years, and a minority of students, self-employed shop-keepers, café owners, and hoteliers. A census carried out by the Prefecture in 1959 numbered 131,819 Algerians for the department of the

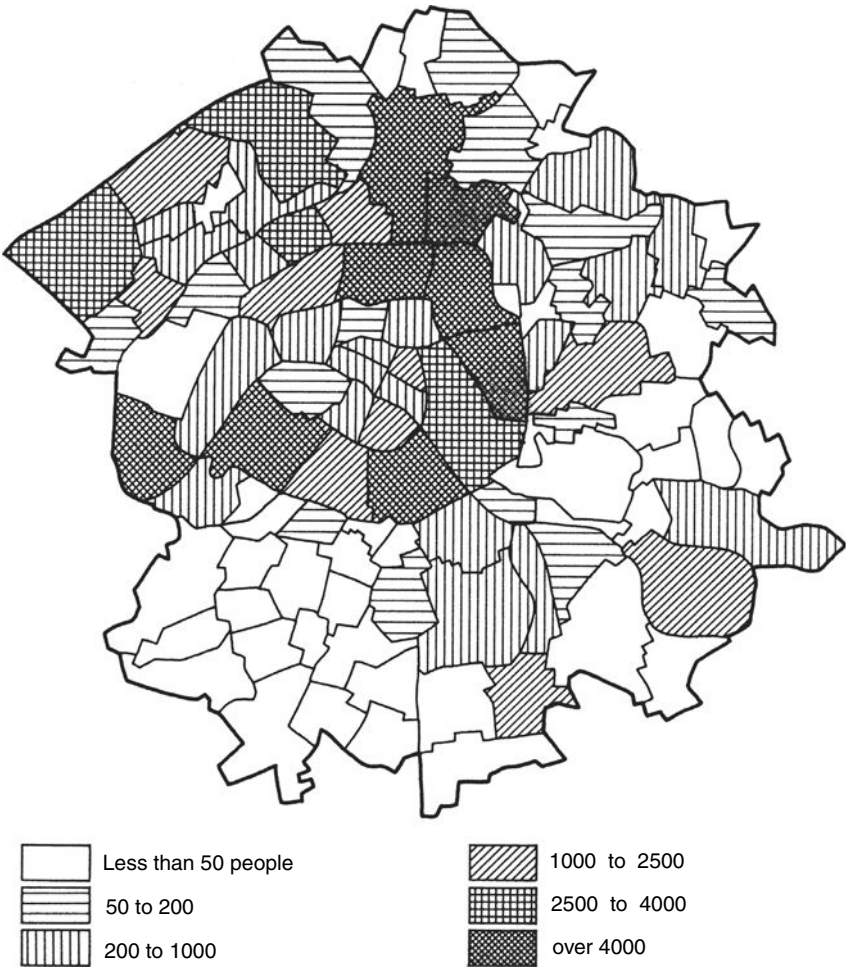
Seine, of which 44,937 (34 per cent) were located in the twenty arrondissements of the central city, and 86,882 (66 per cent) were in the industrial suburbs.[4] Fuelled by the desperate flight of Algerians from the zones of 'pacification', by October 1961 the total had risen to 152,000, of which 8,000 were women and 29,000 children aged under 15 years. However, in the outer suburbs that extended beyond the boundary of Papon's jurisdication as Prefect (department of the Seine) into the Seine-et-Oise and the Seine-et-Marne, there were a further 30,000 Algerians.[5] Thus for greater Paris the total Algerian population in 1961 was about 180,000, the second largest urban concentration after Algiers.

The Algerian immigration to Paris had, as early as the 1920s, become spatially concentrated in dense 'micro-ghettos' or urban enclaves. As the lowest paid workers, Algerians tended to settle in the zones of slum tenement housing in an outer ring of poor arrondissements (the 10th to 15th, and 18th to 20th), or the industrial suburbs to the north and north-west of the city (see Map 2). The density of Algerians increased in particular localities, streets, and lodging houses since chain-migration ensured that men from the same village or region, bound together by kin and ethnic solidarities, shared housing, often an overcrowded hotel run by a landlord or café owner from the same ethnic group.[6] The dense social network of migrants provided an ideal terrain for the growth of the first movement for national independence, the Étoile nord-africaine (ENA) founded and led by Messali Hadj from 1926. In inter-war Paris politicians and senior police officers were concerned with the difficulty of gathering intelligence on the ENA and Algerian communist and trade union militants because of the high level of segregation and the impenetrability of tightly knit groups of men who could immediately identify strangers and police agents.

This pattern of socio-spatial segregation remained intact down to 1954, providing ideal conditions for the elaboration of the clandestine networks of the FLN and Messali's Mouvement national algérien (MNA). The FLN, which had virtually eliminated the MNA in Paris by 1960 after an extremely bloody internecine war, succeeded in establishing an extraordinary hegemonic authority over the entire Algerian population, a sophisticated cell structure and 'counter-state' that presented a major challenge to the Prefecture of Police. In line with the FLN theory and practice of the Organisation politico-administrative (OPA) in Algeria (see Chapter 1), the aim of the FLN Fédération de France was not only to establish a clandestine network of dedicated militants, but also to exert an absolute control over the total population. The key reasons for this can be summarized as follows:

- In the battle for independence the FLN objective was to establish itself as the sole representative (*interlocuteur valable*) of the Algerian people, a party

[4] APP-HA65, Census 1959.
[5] APP-HA60, SAT report dated 12 Dec. 1961; M. Papon report *BMO*-CMP, 27 Oct. 1961, 657.
[6] MacMaster, *Colonial Migrants*, ch. 5.



Map 2. North African population in Paris and the Department of the Seine, *c.*1960
Source: A. and J. Belkhodja, 'Les Africains du Nord à Gennevilliers', *Cahiers Nord-Africains*, 97(1963)

of genuine mass support that the French government would have to recognize and come to terms with. This is why the FLN struggle for hegemony with the MNA was so bloody. As will be seen, a prime purpose of the 17 October demonstration was to assert this mass support as final peace negotiations approached.

- The creation of an internally policed 'counter-state' in which every individual could be identified and located, their spatial movements controlled,

helped prevent penetration by, or collusion with, the MNA and police informers.

- More crucially, total identification and control of population ensured that the FLN could raise maximum funds under a system in which every Algerian was required to pay the equivalent of a state tax, a monthly sum based on earning capacity. Due to the overall higher level of Algerian earnings in metropolitan France compared to Algeria, the FLN was able to raise four hundred million new francs during the eight-year war, about 80 per cent of the total budget of the provisional government (GPRA).[7] The Armée de libération nationale (ALN) that confronted the huge French forces in North Africa was funded by factory workers in Paris. Although Papon represented the battle against the FLN as one primarily against terrorist violence, by far the most important strategic objective was the disruption of the dues collection system.

In addition, the FLN in Paris carried an unusual political weight. The migrants, working within advanced industrial sectors and influenced by the French left and trade unionism, along with students and intellectuals, constituted the most politically mature body of nationalist militants. Paris provided a crucial training ground for the formation of expert cadres and leaders. The Paris nationalists were also well placed to establish contact with, and influence, French intellectuals, left politicians and journalists, as well as the national and international media. Secondly, after the FLN decided to open a 'second front' inside France in August 1958, tying down French military forces by attacking the police and strategic targets, Paris provided a key arena because of the high concentration of government buildings and personnel, and the propaganda value of coups carried out in the prestigious capital, the very symbol of French power.

Between 1958 and 1961 the FLN continuously refined the system of control of the Algerian population in order to assert its hegemony, and to create a closed-in universe that would prove impermeable to French intelligence. By 1961 the FLN had divided France into seven *wilayas* or zones, each with an average of 36,000 adherents. Paris, until a reorganization of boundaries on 1 September 1961, was divided into w*ilaya* 1 which covered the central city and a membership of 36,000, and *wilaya* 2 the ring of outer suburbs with 54,000.[8] The commander of the *wilaya* stood at the apex of an organizational pyramid, the base of which rested on local cells of three to five people, one of them a leader, and which were then grouped together into a ladder of ever larger formations (group, section, sector, region, zone, super-zone).[9] In this cellular clandestine structure liaison between one level and another was only made through a single contact, and strict

[7] Stora, *Ils venaient d'Algérie,* 164–5; Ali Haroun, *La 7è Wilaya*, 307.

[8] *Témoignage chrétien* (10 Nov. 1961), 7–10.

[9] On the structure of the FLN see Stora, *Ils venaient d'Algérie*, 159–63, 317–33; Haroun, *La 7è Wilaya*, 47–65; Papon, *Les Chevaux du pouvoir*, 161–72.

regulations and training—the use of pseudonyms, secrecy as to home address, etc—reduced the chances of police interrogators piecing together organizational links.

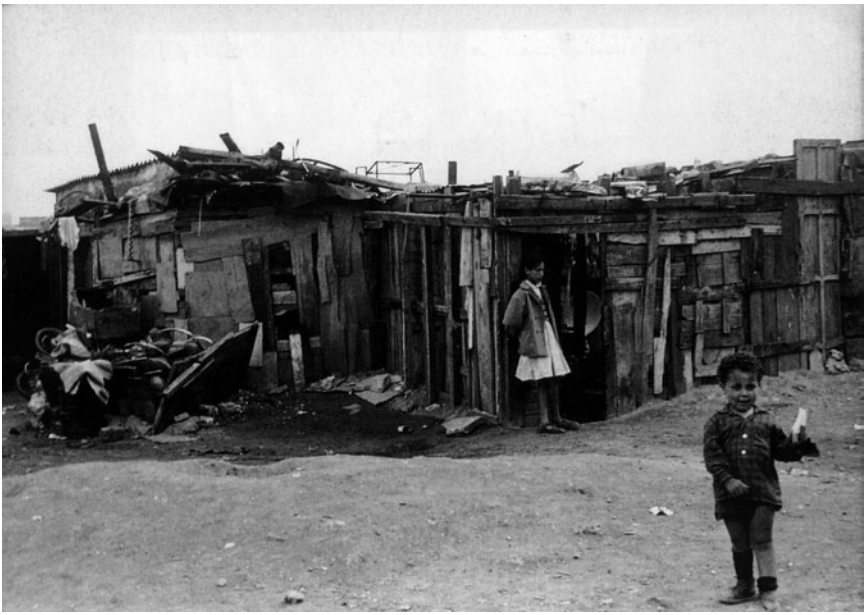
At the local level the OPA exercised a formidable control over the everyday lives of all Algerians. Militant leaders at the grass roots, placed in charge of a lodging house, street, or shanty-town sector, knew personally every individual within his building or block, organised weekly meetings, transmitted propaganda, bulletins, and orders from above, kept a sharp eye on people's movements, located and enrolled new arrivals, and disciplined lax moral and political behaviour. If anybody proved recalcitrant, especially in the monthly collection of dues, they became the subject of a written report and inquiry, and of punishments that extended from fines to beatings and, in the most serious cases (rape, informing, fraudulent use of FLN funds), execution carried out by specially trained commandos, the Groupes armés (GA) or the Organisation spéciale (OS).

Increasingly after 1958, and partly in response to the attempts of Papon to penetrate the Algerian community through the SAT and under the guise of social work, the FLN elaborated a parallel state within a state, a heavily bureaucratized apparatus that sought to provide an alternative to the structures of French government. Local Comités de justice imposed Islamic sharia law, regulated marriage and divorce, settled commercial disputes, and imposed fines for drinking alcohol, brawling, swearing, failure to pay rent, gambling, changing address without permission, and failure to attend FLN meetings or to support boycott actions. The hegemonic intent is shown by the fact that the comités also punished those who had any recourse to the French judicial system.[10] Another body, the local Comités d'hygiene et d'aide sociale, looked after health and social welfare, gave advice on employment, family benefits and rents, inspected lodgings and shanty-towns for hygiène (see Photo 1), ordered repairs, regulated rent levels, and referred the sick to GPs or hospital.[11] Because of the huge number of men held in prison or detention camps, Comités de soutien aux détenus provided monthly payments to dependent wives and children.[12]

The underlying logic of the counter-state was to build an embryo Algerian state apparatus, such a level of institutional completeness and political, cultural, and social autarcky that the immigrants could avoid contact with the surrounding French society and state. This radical impermeability confronted Papon with an apparently insurmountable problem, how to forge links to the mass of Algerians and to gain sufficient leverage to build up a picture of the enemy in their midst. However, Papon brought with him from Morocco and Algeria a system of policing that had already cut its teeth on precisely this problem, how to penetrate and control the Arab enclaves of Casablanca, Algiers, and Constantine.

[10] Especially informative on FLN justice in Paris are the internal reports published by Mohammed Harbi in *Sou'al*, 7 (1987), 22–46; see also Stora, *Ils venaient d'Algérie*, 346–51.

[11] Stora, *Ils venaient d'Algérie*, 343–5. [12] Ibid. 351–3.



1. Children in the shanty town of La Folie at Nanterre. (Monique Hervo.)

THE POLICE APPARATUS OF REPRESSION, 1958–1961

After the revolt of the generals in Algeria in May 1958 and the collapse of the Fourth Republic, Papon, with his usual astuteness, disengaged himself from the outgoing regime and skilfully reinvented himself as a fervent Gaullist integrated into the ruling elite of the Fifth Republic.

On 9 July 1958 the Prime Minister established a working party under the Comité de coordination d'action psychologique (CCAP) with representatives from the Ministries of Information, Interior, and Armed Forces and the police services, in order to study and recommend the most effective forms of psychological and propaganda action that would 'free the mass of Muslims' from subjection to the FLN in France.[13] Historians have argued that de Gaulle was hostile to the doctrine of revolutionary warfare, but the minutes of the working party (23 July, 1 August, 16 October 1958) show that the new regime was prepared to accelerate the introduction of methods of counter-insurgency developed in Algeria and gave full approval to the techniques Papon was already introducing into Paris.[14]

[13] APP-HA59. Order to establish a *groupe de travail*, 9 July 1958; and directive of the Interior Minister, 16 July 1958.

[14] Papon, *Les Chevaux du pouvoir*, 103–4, claims that de Gaulle gave the green light to Papon's reorganization during a meeting with the Prefect in June 1958.

Debates within the working party show that the security forces fully embraced the introduction of the theory and practice of revolutionary warfare into metropolitan France. The mass of Algerians was seen as a naïve and essentially pro-French population which had no basic commitment to the nationalist movement, but which was held in check by a tiny minority of hard-core FLN, estimated at the implausible figure of 5,000 men, who maintained their grip only through terrorist violence. The key government objective was to neutralize the FLN and to weaken its iron grip through a range of strategies that included propaganda, social welfare, and the creation of foci of resistance within the Algerian community. It was hoped, following the example of the armed Groupes d'auto-défense (GAD) established in Algeria, that small anti-FLN groups could be encouraged to secure bases in lodging houses, bastions from which they could defy FLN orders and inspire growing numbers with the confidence to resist and to finally break away.[15] A key element in such thinking was that Algeria would stay French if social and economic improvement could show the masses the benefits of full 'integration', remove the causes of discontent, and demonstrate the genuine advantages of full citizenship.

A second feature of the Comité de coordination was that it recognized the political and legal impediments to introducing into metropolitan France the extremely repressive practices that had been developed in Algeria: the fact that 'legislation and penal procedure are not adapted [in France] to revolutionary warfare' was an obstacle to effective action.[16] The very next day (24 July) Papon responded to this by writing a key briefing document, *Note sur la répression du terrorisme nord-africain,*[17] that was injected back into the working group on 1 August[18] as well as an important meeting of the Ministers of the Interior, Justice, and Armed Forces on 23 August 1958 which established the SCAA and SAT. Papon noted that special powers existed in Algeria to tackle the FLN as well as 'particular techniques that fall more within the operational domain than that of maintaining law and order', a coded reference to extra-legal forms of military repression. In pointing to the weakness and incapacity of metropolitan law to confront the challenge of terrorism he noted that on the eve of 14 July 1958 the police under his new command had carried out the 'preventive arrest' of 700 Algerians, who had been identified and were 'capable of engaging in action'. Unfortunately, the legal limits on detention (48 hours) had forced him to release them, rather than proceeding to a longer term imprisonment without trial and in-depth interrogation as the authorities would have done in Algeria.

Papon outlined four measures that government should introduce:

- To ban from France all suspect terrorists, which would enable the 'military authorities in Algeria to allocate an appropriate repressive regime', the forms of interrogation which public opinion would not tolerate in the metropolis.

[15] APP-HA59, Minutes CCAP, 23 July and 1 Aug. 1958.
[16] APP-HA59, Minutes CCAP, 23 July 1958.
[17] APP-HA88, Papon, *Note sur la répression*, 24 July 1958.
[18] APP-HA59, Minutes CCAP, 1 Aug. 1958.

- To give increased powers to the military tribunals in France.
- To enable individuals to be held in detention by administrative order (*assignation à résidence*) who were suspected of FLN activity but against whom there was insufficient evidence to make a prosecution case in a court of law.
- In the absence of the above, to reintroduce the practice that had existed before the 13 May 1958 of sending individuals back to Algeria by order (*commissions rogatoires*) issued by the courts in Algiers.

Papon's *Note* of 24 July shows how keen he was, within three months of his arrival in Paris, to introduce the system of repression refined in Algeria and also, given that France was not technically at war and all Algerians were French citizens, the fact that he was willing to accept practices that were both discriminatory and in breach of due process. Papon's injection of these proposals into the working party of the Comité de coordination on 1 August, and the dissemination of his document to the Ministers of Justice, the Interior, and Armed Forces, indicates how quickly the Prefect moved to influence government policy. In this he was successful: the government introduced the *Ordonnance* of 7 October 1958 which enabled Algerians to be held under arrest for two weeks, giving police and military time to interrogate individuals, while the Interior Minister was granted powers to hold Algerians in detention camps without trial or to return them into the hands of the army in Algeria.[19]

Rarely could such a proposal for police reorganization have arrived at such an opportune moment, since within forty-eight hours of the official foundation of the SCAA–SAT apparatus on 23 August 1958, the FLN unleashed a major 'second front' in metropolitan France.[20] In response to the coordinated attack on strategic targets in Paris, Papon seized the opportunity to engage in forms of mass arrests and internment that provided a model for the operations on 17 October 1961.[21] The crisis of August 1958 also provided a strong boost to the new policing structures by persuading government to accept such innovative procedures and their budgetary costs.

The remaining part of this chapter examines the origins and structure of the 'Papon System', the repressive apparatus put in place between June 1958 and late 1960. One key objective was to obtain sound intelligence which was regarded throughout the Algerian War by the army and the security services as the most important element in the battle against guerrilla and clandestine networks. Closely linked to this was the overall strategy of revolutionary warfare, a 'totalizing' project that sought to obtain absolute knowledge of the Algerian immigrants, a mastery over every individual through an ineluctable net of bureaucratic controls, lures, intimidation, hotel inspections, *fiches*, and intelligence operations. Symptomatic of this Panoptic vision was Papon's plan to install help desks for

[19] The *ordonnance* of 7 October 1958 provided the crucial 'legal' framework under which Papon's new repressive apparatus (SCAA, SAT, FPA, CIV) could function: on its provisions see Stora, *Ils venaient d'Algérie*, 286–7.

[20] Haroun, *La 7è Wilaya*, ch. 5.

[21] Amiri, *La Bataille*, 69–81.

newly arriving Algerians at Paris stations and Orly airport, but which would secretly register them into the intelligence *fichier*.[22] This 'Papon System', which basically mirrored the FLN domination of the Algerian community and sought to counter it by exerting an even more 'efficient' pressure, involved a certain kind of psychological terror generated by constant insecurity and the daily fear of arrest, the threat of expulsion to Algeria, destruction of property, loss of employment, night-time invasions, forced relocation into distant hotels, and similar arbitrary acts. As will be seen in Chapter 3, this strategy was pushed into overdrive by Papon from late August 1961 onwards and it was the desperate attempt of the FLN to find release from this vice-like grip that led directly into the demonstration of 17 October.

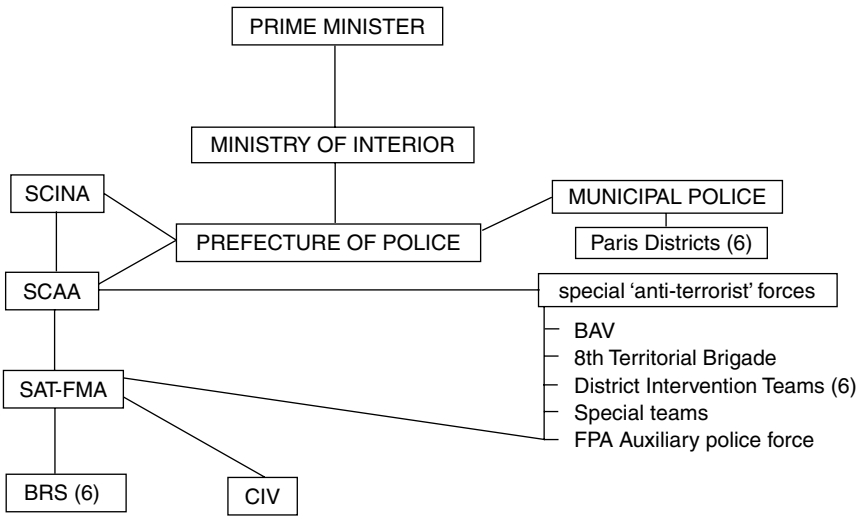
The central cog in the new machinery was the Service de coordination des affaires algériennes (SCAA). Before March 1958 there was no specialist police force, apart from the BAV, dedicated to operations against Algerian nationalists. Papon's intention was to unify the existing disparate and uncoordinated bodies concerned with anti-FLN actions under the overall command of the SCAA.[23] This new hub of operations, which was formally created on 23 August 1958, was modelled on the Centre de renseignement et d'action (CRA) that Papon had perfected in Constantine (Chapter 1). The SCAA, located within the Prefecture of Police, gathered intelligence on the FLN in Paris from a range of sources, including the analysis of seized documents, identified FLN cadres through a central *fichier*, and planned operations (see Figure 1).

The SCAA could, if necessary, call on the services of the main bodies of police, the municipal gardiens de la paix and Police judiciaire or the trained riot police, the CRS and gardes mobiles. However, its key undercover operations and armed raids were carried out by specialized units, the Brigades des agressions et violences (BAV), which had been invented by Baylot; the 8th Brigade territoriale; the Force de police auxiliaire (FPA) commonly known as the *harkis*; and thirty-six small mobile *équipes* of three to five men that patrolled the six police districts in radio cars twenty-four hours a day.

In many ways the most innovative part of the new policing organization that fell under the wing of the SCAA was the Service d'assistance technique aux Français musulmans d'Algérie (SAT-FMA). The SAT was first planned and established by three senior SAS/SAU officers,[24] Roger Cunibile, Louis Parent, and Hippolyte Berenguier, who were secretly flown in from Algeria on 13 August 1958.[25] Paris was divided initially into four, and later six sectors that corresponded to the police divisions (see Map 1, p. 62), each of which had a Bureau de renseignements spécialisés (BRS). Each bureau, strategically located in the densest areas of Algerian population, was controlled by SAS officers brought in from

[22] APP-HA65, Papon to Colonel Tercé, Secrétaire général pour les affaires algériennes, 5 Sept. 1959. [23] AAP-HA88, Papon to De Gaulle, 25 Aug. 1958 on the creation of SCAA.

[24] The Sections administratives urbaines (SAU) were specialized units of the SAS which operated in the major cities of Algeria. [25] On the SAT see Cunibile, 'L'Assistance technique'.



Abbreviations

BAV	Brigade des agressions et violences
BRS	Bureaux de renseignements spécialisés
CIV	Centre d'identification de Vincennes
FPA	Force de police auxiliaire (the '*harkis*')
SAT-FMA	Service d'assistance technique aux Français musulmans d'Algérie
SCAA	Service de coordination des affaires algériennes
SCINA	Service de coordination des informations nord-africaines

Figure 1. The structure of 'anti-terrorist' police and intelligence organizations

Algeria who liaised with the SAT HQ (*État-major*) on the Quai de Gesvres or directly with the SCAA. The overt function of the BRS, like the SAU in Algeria, was to break down the extreme segregation of the Algerian enclaves and to 'fill the void between the two societies'[26] through the provision of social welfare, advice on employment, family benefits and accommodation, issuing of identity cards, and a host of bureaucratic support functions. Although Cunibile claimed that the SAT played no part in the repressive activities of the Prefecture of Police, in reality the fundamental goal was to penetrate and subvert the clandestine FLN network (OPA) and to 'win the Battle for hearts', an order of priorities in which social aid 'constitutes a means rather than the goal'.[27] Since Algerian immigrants were constantly on the move within a vast warren of cheap lodging houses and

[26] Ibid. 39–40. [27] Ibid. 41–3, 74.

shanty towns, and were deeply suspicious of all French authority, the Prefecture of Police faced a seemingly insurmountable problem in trying to penetrate the FLN milieu. The solution to this was sought in a carrot-and-stick approach, a mix of inducements and coercion, that would seek to locate and identify every Algerian by a multitude of filters, of bureaucratic and police checks, that would catch them in one way or another.

Anti-FLN police operations in Paris depended crucially on the location and identification of as many sympathizers and cadres as possible concealed within the sprawling mass of a city of seven million. Cunibile and Berenguier brought into Paris techniques of census gathering that had been tested in the shanty towns (*bidonvilles*) and Arab enclaves of Morocco and Algeria, and built up a huge *fichier* or filing system that was constantly upgraded by fresh intelligence. A number of stratagems were deployed to locate individuals and to ensure that information, such as any change of address, was up to date, among them the operations 'Meublés' and 'Osmose'.

The first 'test-operation' carried out by Papon to penetrate the Algerian enclave began in June 1958 as a joint propaganda exercise with the army Service psychologique to infiltrate lodging houses and shanty towns through the distribution of leaflets and the projection of films. More significant were the Opérations Meublés carried out by 'commando' teams of public health inspectors whose overt purpose was to check legal rent levels and living conditions and to compel landlords to carry out improvements.[28] However, while the teams which went out on a weekly or fortnightly basis consisted of social workers and officers of the lodgings inspectorate (Service des garnis et de l'hygiène), they also included police from the Prefecture whose real objective was to collect information on individuals for the central *fichier*, to establish a census of each lodging house, and to chart the location of suspected groupings of FLN sympathizers or activists.[29]

Once the SAT had established a map of the lodging houses that were thought to be centres of FLN activity it targeted them, from 8 July 1959 onwards, through Opération Osmose, a system first developed in Algeria, which consisted of commando raids which broke up nationalist bastions by forcibly removing inhabitants to lodgings in a distant part of Paris.[30] Algerian militants tended to operate within small ethnic or kin groups that shared lodgings, meals, and leisure-time, close-knit networks that protected clandestine activities from police informers. The brutal and arbitrary night-time Osmose operations seized men from their beds and carried them off by lorry to distant locations where they were dumped into lodgings alongside potentially hostile strangers so as to 'induce a sense of

[28] APP-HA60, *Note sur l'action psychologique à l'égard des Musulmans algériens*, 24 July 1958.

[29] Cunibile, 'L'Assistance technique', 52; APP-HA62, *Opérations meublés*; APP-HA60, Papon to the Secrétariat général pour les affaires algériennes, 3 Feb. 1959, notes that between 26 June and 31 Dec. 1958 some 3,000 rooms and 10 dormitories had been visited in 115 hotels.

[30] APP-HA62, Report of Papon to Interior Minister, 21 July 1959, on the first Osmose trials.

insecurity resulting from mistrust'.[31] This temporarily ruptured the migrant social support networks, the FLN cells, and the all-important money collections. Further problems were created by relocation in lodgings that were far away from the workplace, necessitating a long and costly daily journey. Men who later tried to return to their original lodging, viewed as 'profoundly attached to the clandestine organization' and attempting to reconstitute the FLN cell, were to be arrested and, if necessary, interned. In one instance an Algerian living close to his workplace in the 14th arrondissement was removed to a cellar in Boulogne which he had to share with twelve strangers: when he tried to return to his original lodging he was detained for two months at the Centre d'identification de Vincennes (CIV) and on being freed lost his job and was compelled to return to the cellar.[32] Further pressure was brought to bear on the owners of cafés or hotels that were suspected centres of FLN activity by closing them by Prefectoral order, a measure that also inflicted economic damage and the revenue potential of FLN collections.[33]

The Osmose operation illustrates a general feature of SCAA–SAT repression: the objective was not only to gather intelligence or to dislocate FLN networks, but also to harass and wear down the morale of the entire Algerian community through a multitude of inconveniences and an omnipresent insecurity.

A further tactic deployed by the SAT was to draw Algerians into the local Bureaux de renseignements spécialisés (BRS) by the promise of welfare assistance. The small team of officers and assistants in each bureau provided advice on a range of issues that faced the immigrant, in most instances a semi-literate worker with a smattering of French who needed assistance to cope with bureaucracy, from how to post a money order back to his family in Algeria, to applying for various state benefits (unemployment and sickness pay, family allowances, pension rights). In addition to services which attracted 'voluntary' visits, the Prefecture increasingly made the BRS a place which immigrants were forced to attend to renew identity cards, gain authorization to travel to Algeria or, in October 1961, to obtain passes to go to work during the night-time curfew. Through a combination of the welfare carrot and the stick of bureaucratic coercion, the SAT dramatically increased the number of visitors, reaching a total figure of 274,270 by 1 October 1961.[34] Because of an FLN campaign against the SAT, the great majority came only from administrative necessity.[35] Unknown to many Algerians was the fact that the standard form that SAT officers filled in for each new visitor (name, address, etc.) included a secret evaluation of political and nationalist affiliations.[36]

[31] APP-HA62, Legay, Director of SCAA, to Papon, 16 July 1959.

[32] APP-HA62, Report of conseiller social for Boulogne, Mar. 1960.

[33] APP-HA84, dossier *FPA Implantation (XIIIe arrondissement)*, has several prefectoral closure orders issued in response to information received from Captain Montaner.

[34] APP-HA60, SAT report, 12 Dec. 1961.

[35] Cunibile, 'L'Assistance technique', 67, 70–1.

[36] Ibid. 67–8; APP-HA60, SAT report 12 Dec. 1961 notes that 96,324 individual dossiers had been established by 1 Oct. 1961, about 78% of the total adult population.

The intelligence gathered on the FLN was used to maintain the SAT *fichiers* and was also transmitted to the central SCAA operations unit in the Prefecture.[37]

As has been noted (Chapter 1) an outstanding characteristic of the SAT was the degree to which it attempted to bring a social scientific approach to an understanding of the Algerian community so that it could be better controlled and manipulated. Cunibile and Berenguier, who had served as AI officers in Morocco and trained in the sociology of Robert Montagne, deployed Montagne's methods in Paris. Montagne was particularly interested in the way that Algerian immigration in France was structured by village and tribal groupings and in 1952 was commissioned by the Interior Minister to lead a team that carried out a detailed study of the spatial distribution of ethnic groups in France, in relation to both housing location and employment.[38] Cunibile and Berenguier applied Montagne's approach when organizing the detailed census and sociological study of Algerians in Paris, collecting data on the place of origin and village (*douar*) or ethnic group affiliation of each individual in order to better understand the networks within which the migrants in general, and the FLN in particular, moved.[39] There was some logic to this since the FLN Fédération de France tended to operate not according to party-political structures but along 'clan' or clientele lines based on regional loyalty.[40]

The *fichier* enabled SAT officers to locate the precise village of origin of most workers and Papon pushed hard to establish direct links between SAS officers in Algeria and the corresponding SAT bureaux in Paris which had dense groupings of migrant 'clients' from the same place.[41] The bureaux carefully prepared propaganda meetings in which migrants were invited to attend a presentation by a visiting SAS officer from their home village.[42] For example, invitations were issued to ninety-six individuals from Tifrit-Nait-el-Hadj in Kabylia to attend a meeting in the hall of the second sector on 11 June 1961, to which fifty-three responded.[43] Lieutenant Broizat, the SAS officer for Tifrit, after showing a standard army propaganda film *Algérie Pastorale*, gave a talk on economic reforms achieved in the area, before showing an 8 mm film of the village. After this he handed out letters sent to individual workers from their families before proceeding to the traditional *chikâyas*, a paternalist adjudication of personal problems. The impact of such

[37] Cunibile, 'L'Assistance technique', 84–6.

[38] R. Montagne et al., 'Étude sociologique de la migration des travailleurs musulmans d'Algérie en Métropole', 11 vols unpubl. cyclostyled report, 1954–7. A summary of his approach can be found in Robert Montagne, 'L'Émigration nord-africaine en France: Son Caractère familial et villageois', in *Éventail de l'histoire vivante: Hommage à Lucien Febvre*, i (Paris: A. Colin, 1953), 365–71.

[39] APP-HA65, Berenguier to Papon, *Sur l'utilisation de l'action psychologique dans la lutte contre le FLN*, 24 June 1959.

[40] Mohammed Harbi, *Une vie debout: Mémoires politiques, i 1945–1962* (Paris: La Découverte, 2001), 207.

[41] APP-HA60, Papon to General Salan, Délégué général in Algiers, 14 Oct. 1958.

[42] On the system see Levine, *Les Ratonnades d'octobre*, 36–8.

[43] APP-HA60, Report by Captain de Fay, SAT head of the second sector, 23 June 1961.

communications on homesick workers who often passed years separated from loved ones and their homeland must have been considerable.[44]

However, unknown to those drawn in, the 'twinning' of Algerian SAS and metropolitan SAT officers was part of an intelligence system to track individuals moving between Algeria and France. SAS in Algeria were requested to fill in and return to the SAT standard *fiches* which included questions on an individual's political affiliations in the colony including that of his extended family.[45] This intelligence helped further refine the SAT and SCAA *fichiers*, but information passed from Paris to Algeria held other sinister implications for men forcibly repatriated to their villages. Overall, we can see how SAT officers aspired to a Panoptic project that would enable a total surveillance of Algerians in Paris.

The further standard procedure deployed by the Prefecture of Police for obtaining intelligence on the FLN and, simultaneously, inflicting collective terror, was administrative arrests following either daily stop-and-search operations at street level in which police units would check the identity of single or small groups of Algerians, or through huge round-ups of hundreds of men (see Photo 2). Those arrested were transferred to a special holding centre which, after January 1959, was centralized in the CIV, which was under the control and management of SAT officers. Here the men were interrogated, photographed, finger-printed, and

2. Mass round-up of Algerians by armed police. Location and date unknown. (Archives Humanité.)

[44] Cunibile, 'L'Assistance technique', 90, records forty-eight such SAS visits and a turn-out of 80% of those invited.

[45] APP-HA60, Secret Report by Captain G. Dudreuil, head of SAT sixth sector, 20 Dec. 1960.

placed on *fiche* and then either freed (usually within two days), or, if suspects, retained for up to a further fifteen days for investigation,[46] and then transferred either to prison for trial by military courts or, in the absence of sufficient evidence, held in prison camps at Saint-Maurice l'Ardoise (Gard), Vadenay (Marne), Thol (Ain), Larzac (Aveyron), and Neuville-sur-Ain.[47]

The process of street stops, as will be seen, provided the context in which police violence was most endemic, but here the purpose is to emphasize the constant pressure and insecurity generated by such procedures. In 1958, 121,992 individuals were subjected to street-level controls, and in 1959, 121,699,[48] figures that were higher than the total adult male population. Of those stopped, about a half appear to have been taken to the CIV for identification.[49] Algerians living within the enclave zones were subject to multiple arrest, in the case of one individual on thirty-four occasions.[50] Migrants not only lost valuable pay, but absence from work frequently resulted in dismissal and the loss of right to the normal unemployment benefit. Companies began to refuse to employ Algerians because of their 'unreliability' or their frequent sick leave due to incapacity from police violence.[51] Such a system not only placed a constant pressure on individuals in which going to work was like running a gauntlet, but simultaneously damaged the fund-raising capacity of the FLN.

A further component in the strategy of diffuse and constant insecurity aimed at all Algerians was that of forcible expulsion or refoulement which was first suggested by SAT officers in early 1959.[52] In July 1959 Captain Montaner, the officer in charge of the first SAT sector of Nanterre and later founder of the *harki* brigade, sent an influential document to Papon, *Destruction de l'organisation rebelle*, in which he put forward a number of proposals, including the idea that FLN suspects should not be interned in French camps since they constituted 'schools for militants', but sent directly back to their place of origin. In Algeria they would be handed over to the local SAS or army intelligence officer (*officier de renseignement*) who would decide their fate, 'by forcing them to reveal on which side they stand, even going so far as to propose their departure for the maquis',[53] a common army code for summary execution.[54]

Papon soon relayed these proposals to the Interior Minister, remarking that 'the constant fear of a definitive transfer back to Algeria' would lead migrants to rally

[46] Levine, *Les Ratonnades d'octobre*, 19–21.
[47] Cunibile, '*L'Assistance technique*', 48–51.
[48] APP-HA65, Papon Report to Interior Minister, 17 June 1960.
[49] APP-HA84, *Rapport annuel d'activité des Services* (SCAA) notes that 67,281 Algerians were taken to the CIV in 1960, 3,889 of whom were detained.
[50] *Témoignages et documents*, 32 (Nov. 1961), 6: 'Le Témoignage de l'abbé Depierre'.
[51] Brochure of the Union régionale parisienne des syndicats CFTC, *Face à la répression*, Oct. 1961, 8–9.
[52] APP-HA60, Pillot, head of the SAT, to Papon, 9 Apr. 1959, recommending immediate refoulement of suspect individuals who could not be referred to the judiciary for lack of evidence.
[53] APP-HA84, Montaner to Papon, 5 July 1959, *Destruction de l'organisation rebelle dans le département de la Seine—une solution—la seule* (Secret).
[54] See Einaudi, *Octobre 1961*, 74; Florence Beaugé, *Algérie: Une guerre sans gloire* (Paris: Calmann-Lévy, 2005), 119.

to France.[55] Papon and the Interior Minister then conveyed the plan to the key executive body in charge of anti-FLN repression in France, a top-secret inner cabinet of the Conseil interministériel, the Conseil restreint.[56] The délégué général of Algeria agreed to a trial by which one thousand men would be transferred, as long as they were 'not dangerous'.[57] Refoulement was planned to generate the maximum psychological impact on the Algerian community: for example, it was suggested that five to six men should be transferred every few days over a six-week period, generating a deepening anxiety and giving 'this sanction the exemplary quality that will guarantee its full efficaciousness'.[58]

The threat of refoulement was the sanction most deeply feared by the Algerian community, as Papon told a meeting of Paris councillors and deputies.[59] The Algerian government's refusal to accept 'dangerous' FLN militants shows that refoulement was more a punitive measure aimed at intimidating the whole community than one targeted against key FLN personnel. This trend was confirmed during the crisis of the summer of 1961 when refoulement was not only accelerated but targeted at unemployed Algerians and petty criminals. The measure had catastrophic economic implications for migrant labourers and their kin, and growing numbers of families in France were left suddenly without resources and frequently without information as to what had happened to husbands and fathers who had been arrested and removed to Algeria.[60]

THE CREATION OF THE FORCE DE POLICE AUXILIAIRE

The final component of Papon's SCAA–SAT structure, and the most visible and violent face of repression during 1960–1, was the Force de police auxiliaire (FPA), a quasi-military brigade of 'native' police modelled on the traditional auxiliary forces used by the colonial regime in Algeria.[61] Such a brigade had existed in Paris between 1925 and 1945 as a special unit concerned with the repression of Algerian nationalism, but was disbanded at the Liberation because of its violent collaborationist role.[62] Between 1948 and 1958 Paris councillors

[55] APP-HA65, Papon to Interior Minister, 29 July 1959.

[56] The minutes of the Conseil restreint, located in APP-HA65, provide important evidence as to how Papon's repressive apparatus was approved at the highest level of government; on the Conseil see Papon, *Les Chevaux du pouvoir*, 186–7.

[57] APP-HA65, Conseil restreint, fiche 11, *Mesures de refoulement sur l'Algérie*. See also Stora, *Ils venaient d'Algérie*, 292–4.

[58] APP-HA65, Note dated 26 Apr. 1960.

[59] *Le Monde* (18 May 1960).

[60] APP-H1B35, SCAA Report 1 Dec. 1961 estimates refoulement had deprived the FLN of two million new francs in dues.

[61] Ageron, 'Les Supplétifs algériens'; Rémy Valat, 'Un tournant de la "Bataille de Paris": L'Engagement de la Force de police auxiliaire (20 mars 1960)', *Outre-mer*, 91/342–3 (2004), 321–44.

[62] MacMaster, *Colonial Migrants*, 153–60, 187, 192; Emmanuel Blanchard, 'La Dissolution des Brigades nord-africaines de la Préfecture de police: La Fin d'une police d'exception pour les Algériens de Paris (1944–1958)?', *Bulletin de l'Institut d'histoire du temps présent*, 83 (2004, 1er semestre), 70–82.

had repeatedly pressed for the re-establishment of this body, but the government and Prefect of Police had consistently opposed such a move as discriminatory towards an ethnic group that should be treated as full and equal citizens.[63] Such an argument carried no weight with Papon: indeed, he and Montaner provocatively presented the deployment of *harkis* as a fine example of promoting equality of opportunity for Algerians.

The idea for creating the FPA originated with the SAT officer Captain Raymond Montaner, a figure of central importance in the elaboration of the repressive apparatus in Paris. Montaner, a *pied-noir* born at Boufarik in 1921, fought in Indo-China (1947–55) before serving as an SAS officer at Khémis near the Moroccan border and later as an SAU officer in charge of the sector of Algiers that included the huge *bidonville* of Clos-Salembier, a major bastion of the FLN.[64] Montaner was involved with the operations of the *harki* units, the so-called 'boiler-suits' (*bleus de chauffe*), which carried out a counter-terrorist campaign during the Battle of Algiers, and his expertise in policing shanty-town enclaves explains his appointment in Paris as SAT chief of the first sector which covered the shanty-towns of Nanterre, a hot-bed of FLN militancy. Montaner boasted on his arrival in Nanterre, 'I have pacified an Algerian shanty town and know how to go about it. I am going to install loud-speakers everywhere, people will know that we protect them. The FLN is going to stop terrorizing them.'[65]

Montaner was a dynamic officer, an ascetic man who dedicated himself twenty-four hours a day to a remorseless pursuit of the FLN and who was deeply contemptuous of the liberal establishment that impeded forceful action through respect for correct procedure and legality. In his report to Papon of 5 July 1959, *Destruction de l'organisation rebelle*, Montaner outlined his proposal for *harki* units that would occupy permanent bases in the very heart of the FLN enclaves from which they would directly challenge the enemy on his own terrain. The aim was, 'to achieve an in-depth action on the "available" fraction of the Muslim population . . . This involves our penetration of a wretched population living under a racketeer system that will reverse FLN infiltration', by demonstrating that they could be protected from FLN threats.[66] The *harkis* would live permanently among their 'flock', disrupt FLN collections and activities, and so build up the confidence of Algerians that they could form armed self-defence units, in line with the Groupes d'auto-défense (GAD) established by the army

[63] APP-HA68, *Questions orales et interpellations au Conseil municipal (1957–1961)*, written question by Councillor René Faysset, 21 Feb. 1957, on the re-establishment of the Brigade nord-africaine; also HA88, file *Brigade nord-africaine (1931–1960)* and *Projet de création SCAA (Fév.–Mars 1957).*

[64] Raymond Muelle, *7 Ans de guerre en France: Quand le FLN frappait en Métropole* (Monaco: Éditions du Patrimoine, 2001 edn.), 154, 157; Henry d'Humières, *L'Armée française et la jeunesse musulmane, Algérie 1956–1961* (Paris: Godefroy de Bouillon, 2002), 72–5, 306–11. In Feb. 1999 Montaner appeared as a witness on behalf of Papon in his failed libel action against Jean-Luc Einaudi (see ch. 12).

[65] Levine, *Les Ratonnades d'octobre*, 104.

[66] APP-HA84, Montaner to Papon, 21 Jan. 1960.

in Algerian villages, that would take on the FLN. Small commandos of plain-clothes police would target FLN bases in café-hotels and intimidate owners and clientele by physical violence and destruction of property. Double agents, or 'invisible teams' modelled on the *bleus de chauffe* of Algiers, would generate a climate of distrust and insecurity inside the immigrant community, creating 'psychosis' and generalized panic. Pimps and prostitutes who paid funds to the FLN would be dealt with: 'Who then would defend a prostitute whose hair had been cropped . . . and what's more by Muslims?', a reference to the shaming of women collaborators at the Liberation.[67] These cynical proposals, redolent with the cultivated macho violence of the Algiers paratroopers, were quickly acted on by Papon. In July 1959 he recommended to the Interior Minister the creation of a *harki* force composed of 800 men in uniform and 200 plain-clothes agents, 'using the methods of secret warfare'.[68] On 25 November the Prime Minister gave his formal approval for the creation of the *harkis*, and the same day the SAT officers Pillot, Cunibile, and Montaner met in Papon's Cabinet to plan the new force.[69]

The first contingent of eighty-two Algerian *harkis* arrived by ship in Marseilles on 26 December 1959, and thirty-five men or 43 per cent had identity cards issued by the SAU of Clos-Salembier between March 1957 and 1958, the period when Montaner had been the officer there, and another twelve by the SAU of Hussein-Dey.[70] This might suggest that the core of the Paris FPA was formed of hand-picked men, already known to Montaner as experienced *bleus de chauffe* from the Battle of Algiers. The FPA, based and trained at the HQ of Fort Noisy in the eastern suburbs of Paris, had some three hundred men divided into three companies under the command of European officers, as well as a hundred under-cover agents whose task it was to infiltrate the FLN milieu. On the night of 20 March 1960 the first company of a hundred men was installed permanently in the 13th arrondissement, a strong FLN fiefdom in which over 70 per cent of the 3,700 Algerians paid dues. Six café-hotels were requisitioned as a base and their Algerian occupants forcibly removed to the other side of Paris in an Osmose-style operation.[71] Here Montaner set up his command post at 9 rue Harvey in the heart of the densely populated enclave and so successfully dismantled the FLN region 1221 that cadres began to seek safety elsewhere in Paris.[72] The second company likewise moved into the famous enclave of the 18th arrondissement on 20 November 1960, establishing a command post and annex at 25 and 28–9 in

[67] APP-HA85, Montaner to Papon, 5 July 1959, *Destruction de l'organisation rebelle*; Montaner to Papon, 13 June [1959?], *Utilisation de patrouilles en civil de la FPA*.

[68] APP-HA65, Papon to Interior Minister, 29 July 1959, *Projet d'organisation de force auxiliaire musulmane de Police*.

[69] APP-HA65, Rapport mensuel SAT, Nov. 1959.

[70] APP-HA84, list of FPA recruits.

[71] APP-HA86, Papon to Secrétaire général pour les affaires algériennes, 22 Mar. 1960, on the establishment of the FPA in the 13th arrondissement.

[72] APP-HA84 contains a mass of data on FPA operations in the 13th arrondissement; see also Valat, 'Un tournant', 331–6; Amiri, *La Bataille*, 97–110.

the rue de la Goutte d'Or.[73] The third company, based at Fort Noisy, served as a mobile commando which operated mainly in the suburban *bidonvilles* zones. As will be seen below, the FPA rapidly gained a justified reputation for extreme levels of everyday violence, the systematic terrorization of Algerian neighbourhoods, and the operation of torture centres.

THE SYSTEMATIZATION OF VIOLENCE AND TERROR, JUNE 1958–AUGUST 1961

This section moves on from the 'psychological' forms of repression to the generalization of everyday forms of violence that became endemic within the police force and which show that the events of 17 October 1961 were not an anomaly but a manifestation of a deeply entrenched culture of aggressive racism. Second, the question of systematic torture is important since it indicates the extent to which the Paris police was prepared to resort to illegal violence, again a harbinger of the October events.

On a daily basis police foot and car patrols, especially by the *harkis* and the district special squads (*équipes spéciales*) concentrated in the Algerian sectors, stopped and carried out identity checks on hundreds of migrant workers. This was an occasion for brutal assault on such a recurrent basis that it is possible to identify a 'standard' procedure: the individual intercepted, often at gun-point, in the street, café, or lodging house, was subjected to verbal abuse, rough handling, and violent assault. Identity cards or other papers were thrown on the ground, confiscated, or torn up, exposing the Algerian to attack and arrest by follow-up patrols and forcing him to go through the time-wasting procedure of applying for replacement papers.[74] Assault was also frequently accompanied by acts of theft and systematic stop-and-search operations increased at factory gates on pay day.[75]

Street-level violence occurred most frequently at night or early in the morning and in Algerian districts in which there were few potential European witnesses who might lodge a complaint. Those arrested were usually taken by car or van to local police stations and then for interrogation and identification to Vincennes (CIV). During this stage of transit the police, hidden from the public eye, could engage in more drawn-out and sadistic rituals of racial abuse. A standard procedure was to inflict humiliating treatment and economic damage by slashing new clothing with razors, staining with ink, or smashing wrist watches. The writer Marguerite Duras was told by one Algerian worker how in police stations there was, 'a certain bloke with a small hammer. They said: "Put out your left hand". They took our watch. And this man with the hammer broke our watch and put it

[73] APP-HA88 reports on installation and intelligence operations in the 18th arrondissement.

[74] The Director of SCAA issued an order on 24 Oct. 1961 to stop the practice since it was creating too much work for SAT officers who had to replace destroyed identity cards: APP-HA110, circular no. 46–61, 14 Nov. 1961.

[75] CFTC, *Face à la répression*, 5.

with the other smashed watches.'[76] In countless instances beatings were so severe—a favourite target were blows to the stomach and sexual organs which left few external signs—that Algerians were hospitalized for weeks with cracked ribs, broken arms and legs, wounds to the head, skull fractures, and serious internal injuries.

Here we detail only one illustrative case which is typical of the many hundreds recorded. Abdel-Kader Khannous, in a statement made to an investigating magistrate (*juge d'instruction*) in the surgical ward of the Lariboisière Hospital on 18 October 1961, recounted how on 4 October on his way home from work he was stopped by a police control near the Métro Barbès. From there he was placed in a police van which then picked up five more Algerians. They were all beaten up with truncheons on the way to a police station (Khannous's glasses were smashed into his face) where they were ordered to strip to the waist and were attacked with iron bars. Khannous was so badly injured that an officer said, 'we can't take him to Vincennes. Let's leave him in the street, he can die.'[77]

In most instances the victims, illiterate and terrified workers, had no means to make a complaint or were too traumatized to enter a police station where they risked further assault. In spite of this under-representation the archives still contain evidence of many hundreds of individual cases of such daily brutality.[78] In many instances where police and judicial archives have left a trace this was because the individuals caught up in indiscriminate police violence were educated, of a higher social class, had political connections, or were foreign nationals of Mediterranean appearance (Moroccans, Tunisians, Portuguese).[79] The racist violence which targeted 'Algerian looking' individuals generated a stream of official protests from foreign governments: for example, a Moroccan minister after a visit to Paris in September 1961 said that nationals had complained of 'ill-treatment and that they had been the target of harassment, bullying, systematic arrest, body searches, forced entry of their homes, and humiliating treatment'.[80] The deputy Claudius-Petit remarked in the National Assembly, 'Happy the fair Kabyles who have been able to escape the police net!'[81]

The installation of the FPA marked a further deepening of this cycle of daily repression and violence. The *harkis*, Arab and Berber speakers with an intimate

[76] *France-Observateur* (9 Nov. 1961), 8–10.

[77] Archives de la Ville de Marseille: Fonds Gaston Defferre, 100 ii 282, Plainte au Doyen des Juges d'Instruction de M. Khannous Abdel-Kader, 18 Oct. 1961.

[78] See also the huge number of cases in Einaudi, *La Bataille de Paris* and *Octobre 1961*, and in Brunet, *Police contre FLN*, ch. 6, 'Des sévices au quotidien'.

[79] The more detailed files on assault also reflect the fact that Papon was only concerned to investigate and 'cover' complaints that threatened to become politically embarrassing: see e.g. APP-HA110, the case of a radio reporter brutalized by police which was taken up by the influential Secretary of State, Mme Sid Cara; APP-HA88, the son of the Algerian Senator, Salah Benacer; and a Martiniquais beaten and robbed on 13 May 1960, whose complaint was supported by a leading Paris publisher.

[80] *Le Monde* (19 Sept. 1961).

[81] *JODP* (Senate), 30 Oct. 1961, 3605. Kabyles were traditionally reputed to have 'European' racial features.

insider knowledge of the Algerian milieu and customs, represented a formidable opponent for the FLN and their provocative location in the enclaves of the 13th and 18th arrondissements triggered a sequence of major FLN commando attacks on the FPA centres. The volatile brutality of the *harkis* derived from a number of causes: these men had burnt their bridges by tying themselves to the French army, and as the possibility of a negotiated settlement grew through 1960–1, so their future in an independent Algeria looked exceedingly bleak. Their growing desperation found expression in vengeance exacted on fellow Algerians, with the vicious intensity that historically has been a feature of internecine civil wars. Second, officers in charge of the *harkis* had an interest in permitting a culture of brutality since the utilization of 'native' soldiers, with a reputation for savagery, had long been an instrument of divide and rule, as well as of punitive terror, in colonial armies.[82] The archives contain numerous letters of complaint and petitions, many of them from French citizens, local shop-keepers, and tourists, who were witness to, or the subject of, brutality by *harki* patrols.[83] A grocer from the Goutte d'Or denounced a 'veritable regime of terror', while another inhabitant noted the 'savagery' with which Algerians were beaten and while accepting the need to be 'tough and severe with the events going on, but even so, they are human beings'. The intensity of FPA activity within the 13th, 14th and 18th arrondissements, the interception of Algerians at gun-point, the constant invasion of cafés, shops, and hotels by brutal squads, the public beatings and shouted threats, and the smashing of property, drove away custom and severely disrupted the economic life of the *quartier*, damaging the revenue base of the FLN.

After an FLN attack on the FPA base in the 18th arrondissements on 1 April 1961, over a hundred *harkis* engaged in a punitive frenzy of violence and destruction, randomly attacking every dark-skinned passer-by with iron bars, knives, and rifle butts. The windows of forty-five shops and cafés were smashed, thirty-two were systematically pillaged, and over 300 Algerians were assaulted.[84] In just one of many legal depositions by victims, Mohamed Drici described how on 2 April at 10.45 p.m. three *harkis* broke down the door of his room while he was asleep, slashed him on the wrist, and kicked him down the stairs into the street where he stood for two hours in the rain, dressed only in pyjamas, with his hands in the air. While being taken to the police station in the rue Fleury he was shot in the throat, further beaten at the station, and then hospitalized at Saint-Louis.[85] A senior doctor at the Lariboisière, the hospital closest to the Goutte-d'Or, confirmed that by Monday afternoon 150 cases had been treated in surgery and other wounded

[82] Neil MacMaster, *Racism in Europe, 1870–2000* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2001), 129–32.

[83] APP-HA88, dossier 'FPA Plaintes' (1960–2).

[84] Paulette Péju, *Ratonnades à Paris* précédé de *Les Harkis à Paris* (Paris: La Découverte, 2000; 1st publ. 1961), 110–33; also APP-H1B12, dossier on the FPA destruction of cafés on 2 Apr. 1961.

[85] Péju, *Les Harkis*, 128–9. Text of deposition, 29 Apr. 1961, with a medical certificate issued by the hospital 28 Apr.

had to be diverted to the Dubois Hospital. Doctors appealed by telephone to the Prefecture to 'stop this slaughter' but met with no response.[86]

The FPA presented a particularly dangerous brigade because its officers and *harkis* were recruited by and from the army, and constituted a kind of quasi-autonomous unit that operated outside the normal hierarchical control of the main police force and the checks and balances that operated to ensure some degree of restraint and accountability. At the annual congress of the major police union, the politically moderate Syndicat général de la police (SGP) on 10 May 1961, Joseph Gommenginger stated that the FPA 'had initiated violent attacks and were a constant source of trouble for the whole police force . . . escaping its control and too often casting discredit on our corps by behaviour outside the bounds of current laws.'[87]

The *harkis* constituted a parallel police force that, while appearing to have run dangerously out of control, was steered in this direction by European officers. In the spring of 1961, as accusations of violence and torture built up against the FPA, Montaner tried to protect his men from judicial investigation. He feared that the naïve *harkis*, 'faced with a legal system that they do not understand', could be readily induced by examining magistrates to reveal incriminating evidence and the nature of the orders they had received from officers, 'and what is more to denounce the Captain, behind whom, quite naturally, they will try to hide'. Captain Montaner submitted a report in which he recommended that police investigators and magistrates should only be allowed to interview the *harki*'s superior officers and, in particular, Montaner himself since they would hesitate to accuse a person of such rank and he 'is of sufficient stature to stand up to the magistrates as well as the lawyers of the enemy'.[88] The response to this report is unknown but it discloses the extent to which Montaner thought that the FPA could operate outside the law. In spite of the huge body of detailed evidence on FPA violence and torture, very few prosecutions were ever brought against the *harkis*, and only one succeeded. As the officer Raoul Letard notes, the FPA operated with impunity: 'they were protected, super-protected, they were untouchable'.[89]

TORTURE: THE PLANNING AND INSTRUMENTALIZATION OF VIOLENCE

The controversial issue of whether systematic torture existed in Paris is of some interest, since it can be argued that a state that allowed security forces to engage in such a serious abuse of human rights may well have tolerated the conditions under

[86] Ibid. 113. [87] Archives SGP-FO, *Congrès fédéral*, 10–12 May, Minutes, pp. 746–7.

[88] APP-H1B30, report *Au sujet de l'exécution de commissions rogatoires confiées à l'Inspection générale des services*.

[89] Archives Institut des hautes études de la sécurité intérieure (IHESI), transcript of interview with Raoul Letard, 11 May 1993, 7.

which 'disappearances' and killings were likely. That torture was deployed by the French army on a vast scale in Algeria is no longer disputed by historians or even by high-ranking officers who played a key part in its implementation.[90] However, whether torture crossed the Mediterranean into the French capital remains contested, in part because a regime of dual rights has made it more difficult to accept that such barbaric practices could occur in the very heart of metropolitan civilization and in a Republic which defined its core values in relation to the Resistance and opposition to Gestapo atrocities.

On 18 June 1959 Paris bookshops began to sell *La Gangrène*, a slim but devastating volume which recorded in detail the first-hand experience of five Algerians tortured by the DST, the counter-espionage service, at its headquarters in the rue des Saussaies.[91] Although this caused enormous controversy, a more important debate on torture that relates specifically to the Prefecture took place in early 1961 after the capture of twenty-four members of an FLN commando (OS unit) operating in the Paris region.[92] Between 17 January and 9 March 1961 at least twenty-seven named individuals claimed they had been tortured in the HQ of the *harkis* at 28 rue de la Goutte d'Or and 9 rue Harvey in the 18th and 13th arrondissements.[93] Details of these atrocities reached the media, first in *L'Humanité* on 7 March, which was immediately seized by Papon, as were a number of other publications which carried similar revelations.[94] But Papon was unable to stifle controversy and finally there was a long and heated debate in the Conseil général de la Seine (CGS) on 17–18 March, when Louis Odru, Mayor of Montreuil, and Claude Bourdet, editor of *France-Observateur* and councillor for the 13th arrondissement, detailed the torture of Amor Merdjmedj and Saïd Chiker.

Papon, in a long and carefully prepared rebuttal, argued that the accusations of torture were part of a 'campaign of false accusations' mounted by the FLN, their lawyers and the left media, to damage the *harkis* precisely because they had been so successful in the war on terrorism.[95] The Prefect, as did the army in Algeria, also produced FLN documents which, it was claimed, were orders to militants to invent charges of torture if they should be arrested: the patriot 'must not hesitate to burn himself when he is alone, to bash himself against the wall, a table or partition'.[96] The collective of FLN lawyers[97] was certainly capable of operating such a propaganda offensive and had access to their clients so that it would have been possible to coordinate the close detail of statements of torture, of time, place,

[90] On the admission of torture see General Massu in *Le Monde* (22 June 2000) and General Aussaresses, in *Services spéciaux Algérie, 1955–1957* (Paris: Perrin, 2001).

[91] Bachir Boumaza et al., *La Gangrène* (Paris: Minuit, 1959).

[92] APP-H1B19, file *Organisation spéciale—Ouissa Ighilariz* (1961); Péju, *Les Harkis*, 51.

[93] Péju, *Les Harkis*, 43–106; APP-HA88, APP-H1B12, and APP-H1B14.

[94] Péju, *Les Harkis*, 58, 107, 111. The *Humanité* article by Madeleine Riffaud was reprinted by *Vérité-Liberté*, 8 (Apr. 1961), 4–5. APP-H1B14 contains a typed transcript, marked 'secret', 9 Mar. 1961, of a tapped telephone conversation between Riffaud and the FLN lawyer Ben Ablallah on the torture cases.

[95] *BMO*-CGS, 17–18 Mar. 1961, 132–3.

[96] Ibid. 134–5.

[97] See Haroun, La *7è Wilaya*, ch. 10.

and circumstance, that gave them such plausibility. The historian is confronted with a world of mirrors that makes any certainty problematic, but a critical scrutiny confirms the existence of torture.

On 16 March 1961 Slimane Amirat testified before the examining magistrate Braunschweig how he had been taken by *harkis* to 28 rue de la Goutte d'Or on 26 January where Captain Montaner had threatened him: 'I can lodge a bullet in your brain and put you in a sack with the words "traitor to the FLN". Then I will throw you in the Seine', before calling on Lieutenant Derogeot and four *harkis* to take him down to a cellar to be tortured.[98] Is this a fabrication? There is every reason to believe that the Captain would have had some knowledge of interrogation methods used by the army in Algeria. While Montaner was head of the SAU of Clos-Salembier in 1958 he seems to have been on good terms with the parachutists of the Villa Susini, the most notorious of the Algiers torture centres, which was in his sector.[99] Moreover, the police archives show that during 1961 Montaner had established himself as the most experienced interrogator or *officier de renseignements*[100] in Paris to whom both the DST and the Prefecture handed over the most important FLN leaders after their arrest.[101] These interrogations, in the cellars of the 18th arrondissement and Fort Noisy, were carried out on FLN cadres who were detained in secret, so that they had no legal protection from abuse and assault. While it is possible to argue that FLN militants could have invented details of torture by the 'standard' techniques (electricity, water, impaling on bottles), this is not true of the serious injuries which they sustained. Medical certificates were not only provided by doctors who may have been sympathetic to the FLN, but also by police and hospital surgeons as well as doctors appointed by the court, who frequently verified evidence of torture even when, as was often the case, months had passed and injuries had had time to heal. A typical instance was that of Slimane Boulakdam who was forced to drink water and bleach and had his right arm broken in the cellar of the *harki* HQ, before being hospitalized at the Hôtel-Dieu where he remained for eighteen days. The house surgeon, Dr Cormier, issued a certificate confirming a fracture of the right ulna (forearm) and of ribs on the left side. He was subjected to a further examination by order of a magistrate on 30 March 1961, nearly two months after the torture, and Drs Martin and Lecœur confirmed 'the statements of the victim as to his ill-treatment'.[102]

[98] Péju, *Les Harkis*, 51–2.

[99] CAOM 2SAS59, Montaner monthly SAU report, Apr. 1958; on the torture centre see Henri Pouillot, *Mon combat contre la torture* (Saint-Denis: Bouchène, 2004).

[100] On the use of torture by the OR see Branche, *La Torture*, 176–94.

[101] APP-H1B13, report Director of SCAA to Papon, 30 Nov. 1961; APP-HA65, note of 16 Dec. 1961 on FLN men held at Noisy.

[102] Péju, *Les Harkis*, 82–4; on the verification of other cases, ibid. 63–5, 68–70, 78–9; Emmanuel Blanchard, 'Les Brigades des agressions et violences (BAV): Une police parisienne des Algériens (1953–1962)?' (unpublished paper), 11 Mar. 2005, 19; Valat, 'Un tournant', 338–40, is of an opposite opinion and argues that the beatings that did take place did not go as far as torture, although the types of physical and mental pressure which he refers to would almost certainly be defined as torture in contemporary international courts of human rights.

Behind the scenes, alarm bells were ringing in the government. On 9 March, within hours of the first disclosures of torture, the President of the Commission de sauvegarde des droits et libertés individuels, the quasi-judicial body set up as an ombudsman in April 1957 to investigate abuse and protect Algerian rights, wrote to Papon that the *harkis* should cease to use cellars for interrogations and that on transfer to the CIV each prisoner be given a medical examination.[103] The Prefect replied that he would close the cellars within forty-eight hours, but asked that this be kept secret so as not to provide ammunition to FLN propagandists.[104] Papon had little to worry about on that front since the Commission rarely, if ever went public or disclosed its findings on torture. However, it must have been of some concern to Papon that Viatte, a senior commissioner, interviewed thirteen of the Algerians victims between 22 and 27 March and produced a report which noted that the men had been arrested and detained illegally in the absence of the Police judiciaire.[105] This report was sent to Debré on 7 April and the Prime Minister, concerned with the growing volume of adverse publicity, decided to bring Papon into line at a meeting of the Conseil interministériel on 10 April. The Prime Minister insisted that the FPA 'have no recourse in any situation to the ill-treatment or torture of which it is accused', a charge that Papon vociferously rejected while noting that perhaps during certain police operations 'a certain violence may have been used'. Debré also asked that an officer of the Police judiciaire be present during FPA operations, as required in law, to draw up a report indicating that Algerians were being arrested according to the legal code.[106]

Eventually, the public scandal of FPA violence led to the withdrawal of the two companies located in the 13th and 18th arrondissements back to the base at Fort Noisy on 27–8 June. It seems likely that this decision was taken at the highest level, since the French negotiators at Évian on 29 June and 3 July offered this move as a gesture of goodwill, in return for which the FLN agreed to halt attacks on the French police.[107] However, this move to Noisy, although it removed the *harkis* from media attention, did not represent a significant change in the pattern of violence. As we shall see (Chapter 3) the FPA companies now began to operate on a daily basis from Noisy as rapid intervention forces that invaded and increasingly terrorized Algerian neighbourhoods, especially the suburban *bidonvilles*, during the crucial months before 17 October 1961.

[103] APP-H1B13, Patin to Papon, 9 Mar. 1961, stamped 'Secret'. On the Commission de sauvegarde, which lacked authority and remained subservient to government, see Heymann, *Les Libertés publiques*, 134–40; Thénault, *Une drôle de justice*, 265–6.

[104] APP-H1B13, Papon to Patin, 10 Mar. 1961.

[105] Maurice Faivre, *Conflits d'autorités*, 141.

[106] APP-HA84, Minutes 10 Apr. 1961; Brunet, *Police contre FLN*, 67, quotes an anonymous SCAA note from this period which states that the FPA 'did perhaps commit some excesses', but emphasized that 'we must stop these [judicial] investigations before they get under way . . . In this matter there are imperatives far more important than the search for the truth.'

[107] Brunet, *Police contre FLN*, 69, and press reports in *France-Observateur* and *L'Express* (13 July 1961).

With the move back to Noisy, Captain Montaner also relocated the OR team to the Fort where he established his own *fichier* and intelligence-gathering operations, received reports from *harki* agents working undercover in the Algerian community, carried out interrogations, and synchronized commando raids. Throughout 1961 Papon and his senior officers practised a series of deceptions, concealing from the Commission de sauvegarde the existence of an interrogation centre at Noisy. On 17 March 1961 Patin wrote to Papon asking him if there was any substance to Algerian complaints that they had been interrogated in the fort, which the Prefect denied.[108] When the FPA was pulled out from central Paris on 27–8 June Montaner, having now lost his interrogation centres in the cellars of the 13th and 18th arrondissements, requested that this be allowed to continue either at Fort Noisy or in an empty police station, or in the 'back room of a bar where they could install themselves for a few hours'.[109]

On 31 October Viatte of the Commission de sauvegarde visited Fort Noisy to investigate a claimed disappearance of five Algerians detained there. Viatte, after a detailed inspection, provided a favourable report in which he noted that the move of the FPA to Noisy 'seems to have put a stop to certain previous excesses. Captain Montaner appears to keep a very strict discipline in the fort.' On 9 November Papon reported to the Interior Minister that the Commission had demolished the false accusations against the *harkis*.[110] However, all was not what it seemed. Montaner told Viatte that Papon had forbidden him to hold and interrogate Algerians at the fort.[111] But literally hours before Viatte's inspection, an operation had captured a leading FLN member who was interrogated by Montaner at Noisy.[112]

The balance of evidence is that the terrible experiences recorded by FLN suspects in the cellars of central Paris did indeed occur, and that several of them attempted suicide by slashing themselves with shards of glass and by hanging. Nor is there reason to think that interrogation methods were any less forceful when secretly transferred to Fort Noisy: indeed, a further and sinister element in this location was that Montaner shared the facility and worked closely with the Service action (SA), the special forces unit of the secret service SDECE (Service de documentation extérieure et de contre-espionnage). The SA, founded by General Aussaresses in 1946,[113] was to play a murderous role not only in Algiers, with the killing of Maurice Audin, Ben M'Hidi, and Boumendjel, but also in Paris. The possible connections between the FPA and this shadowy parallel force during the events leading into October 1961 will be explored in Chapter 6.

[108] APP-HA86, Patin to Papon, 17 Mar. 1961; Papon reply to Patin, 22 Mar. 1961.

[109] APP-HA86, Commissaire principal (Chief Superintendent) Roger Chaix to Director of SCAA, 26 June 1961, plans for FPA relocation at Fort Noisy.

[110] Brunet, *Police contre FLN*, 70–1.

[111] Ibid. 70.

[112] APP-HA110, Report of A. Gaveau to Papon, 5 Nov. 1961.

[113] Aussaresses, *Services spéciaux*, 11.

3

The Police Crisis and Terror, July to 16 October 1961

By the summer of 1961 the Algerian War was reaching a tense and critical phase, with negotiations between the French government and the Gouvernement provisoire de la République algérienne (GPRA) at Évian (20 May to 13 June) and Lugrin (20–8 July). The ongoing talks and the prospect of Algerian independence, far from creating a situation in which both sides could readily agree to a cessation of hostilities, a reduction in armed conflict and loss of life so as to establish a positive ambience for negotiation, generated a phase of profound political instability in which both sides were riven by internal divisions. The period was marked by a sense of deep and often obscure forces at work, a sinister climate that reflected the clandestine manœuvres by which 'ultra' forces within the Organisation armée secrète (OAS), and concealed within the state apparatus (in the army, police, judiciary, civil service), sought—even at the last moment—to sabotage negotiations. Likewise, on the Algerian side, the apparently hegemonic FLN was torn by internal tensions as different groups, looking towards a future independent state, began to manœuvre for power.

The violence that erupted in Paris between August and October was, in the final analysis, a specific and 'localized' reflection of this wider international arena in which the ultimate crisis of decolonization was played out in a murderous trial of strength between the FLN and the French state. How these wider tensions were reflected at the local level, between clandestine nationalist and secretive counter-intelligence forces, was extremely complex, if not obscure. This chapter is structured around four key phases: first, the resumption and acceleration of FLN attacks on the Parisian police from late August 1961 onwards; second, Papon's response to this challenge, particularly in the form of a critical deepening of a campaign of terror aimed at the entire Algerian community; thirdly, the police frustration with what was viewed as a failure of the legal system and government to counter FLN terrorism, precipitating a recourse to illegal procedures; and finally, the emergence of systematic police killings from early September onwards that culminated in the paroxysm of violence on 17–18 October. The secret planning of the demonstration by the FLN between 7 and 14 October can be interpreted against this background as a response to the remorseless pressure

and unprecedented levels of violence that had been unleashed on the immigrant community.

THE FLN ATTACK ON THE POLICE FORCE

The period from 5 June to 15 August 1961 was one during which the FLN in Paris, abiding by a quasi-official truce imposed by the GPRA, largely desisted from offensive attacks on the police and *harkis*. However, this informal cease-fire was breached by the Paris FLN when GA commandos regained a degree of autonomy on 15 August[1] and immediately launched attacks on the FPA, killing two *harkis* and an informer.[2] These assassinations passed almost unnoticed, an indication of an entrenched racism which regarded all Algerians as expendable, and politicians and media only began to register a renewed FLN offensive on 29 August when three police officers died as a consequence of five synchronized attacks in different parts of Paris.[3] This onslaught marked the beginning of a murderous five weeks during which FLN commando units assassinated a further ten officers, including Georges Perrache and Florent Pecquier of the SAT.[4] 1961 was undoubtedly the most deadly year of the Algerian War for the Parisian police, as Table 1 indicates. During the five-week period 29 August to 3 October there were at least thirty-three separate attacks by armed FLN groups resulting in thirteen police deaths, more than the annual total in any previous year.

The FLN offensive, mostly aimed at isolated officers on their way to or from work, began to create a climate of tension and nervous anger throughout the police force. This generated a deep crisis in which many officers, frustrated by what they regarded as a weak liberal regime and a legal system that failed to effectively sentence and execute 'terrorists', were increasingly prepared to take matters into their own hands and to settle scores directly with the Algerian community as a whole.

How and why the FLN attacks resumed is of importance to an understanding of the political crisis that erupted in Paris in late 1961. From 1957 onwards the issue of whether a 'second front' should be opened in France was one that deeply divided the FLN at the highest levels. When in August–September 1957 the Conseil national de la Révolution algérienne (CNRA) in Cairo ordered that the war be taken onto French soil, the imprisoned leaders Aït-Ahmed, Ben Bella, Boudiaf, and Khider opposed this decision on the grounds that migrant labourers

[1] APP-H1B4, SCAA annual report for 1961.

[2] APP-H1B12, SCAA note to Papon, 17 Aug. 1961, *Au sujet d'une recrudescence de l'activité terroriste algérienne*.

[3] APP-H1B4, SCAA register of FLN attacks, entry for 29 Aug. 1961.

[4] Attacks occurred on 29 Aug. (5 victims) 3 Sept. (2 victims), 4, 5, 6, 8, 10 (3 victims), 12, 13 (2 victims), 16, 17 (2 victims), 21, 22, 28, 29 (2 victims), 30, 2 Oct. (2 victims), 3. Information taken from *Le Monde*; see also Brunet, *Police contre FLN*, 74–85.

Table 1. Number of police and *harkis* killed and wounded (1 January 1957 to 20 November 1961)

	Killed	Wounded
1957	0	3
1958	12	22
1959	4	10
1960	9	29
1961	22	76
TOTAL	47*	140

* Of the 47 killed, 23 were *gardiens de la paix*, 4 *police judiciaire*, 14 FPA, 3 SAT, 2 from other services.

Source: APP-HA65. Statistics of FLN attacks.

were already isolated and deeply vulnerable to racism and repression.[5] This acknowledged that launching sabotage and assassinations in France would expose the émigré community to even further pressure and there was a danger that provoking a police clampdown would disrupt the fund-raising network of the Federation, which was perhaps more important than any strategic gains to be made from an offensive in metropolitan France. However, a 'second front' was eventually opened on 25 August 1958. The idea behind the attacks on strategic locations (oil refineries, military installations) and on security forces was that this would tie down soldiers in France and relieve the pressure on the ALN in Algeria, while adding to the overall economic costs of war.

During the following three years the Comité fédéral and the FLN militants in Paris became strongly committed to an offensive war on French soil. However, as the Algerian Provisional Government entered a series of peace talks with the French in 1960–1 the GPRA began to place increasing pressure on the Fédération de France to cease armed actions so as to create a climate that would favour negotiation. The powerful Federation was distinctly reluctant to obey such orders and when the Comité fédéral[6] was instructed days before the first negotiations at Melun (25–9 June 1960) to halt armed attacks, it replied by dispatching a detailed critical report which noted that it would be unwise to demobilize the Paris activists who faced daily violence from Papon's forces and that the latter would seize the opportunity to redouble the repression. A ceasefire would lower the defences of the rank and file and induce false expectations that would irreversibly demobilize the militant elan in the event of a failure in the talks.[7]

Although offensive actions quickly resumed with the failure of the Melun negotiations, this scenario was repeated with the peace talks at Évian (20 May to

[5] Harbi, *Une vie debout*, 219–20, 391–400.

[6] The committee, which transferred for security reasons to Germany from early 1958, was made up of Omar Boudaoud (head of the Federation), Saïd Bouaziz, Ali Haroun, Kaddour Ladlani, and Abdelkrim Souici: see Haroun, *La 7è Wilaya*, 33–44, 440.

[7] Haroun, *La 7è Wilaya*, 428. Report of the Comité fédéral, 23 June 1960, appendix, 501–2.

13 June 1961). On the opening day of the negotiations Louis Joxe announced a unilateral truce by which French forces would immediately halt offensive operations in Algeria. The FLN delegates recognized this as a dangerous ploy to demobilize its own forces and in general the GPRA was inclined to follow the opposite strategy of deepening the war in Algeria so as to reinforce its negotiating position.[8] However, the FLN negotiators seem to have taken a different perspective on the situation in France: the commando attacks in Paris carried little military weight, while adverse publicity in the press surrounding 'terrorist' assassinations threatened to alienate public opinion and to undermine the international image of the GPRA. The French delegates offered to withdraw the *harkis* to Fort Noisy as a gesture of goodwill and this was reciprocated by an FLN decision to halt attacks on police officers and by 5 July the GPRA had transmitted an order for a ceasefire to the Federation of France.[9]

While the Comité fédéral appears to have been opposed to or deeply uncomfortable with this order it is almost inconceivable that it would have disobeyed the GPRA. The entire structure of the FLN hierarchy was bound by a ferocious internal discipline and flagrant disobedience could be punished by a death sentence. French intelligence reports in July and August indicated that the GPRA, within the context of the Évian negotiations, was exerting a growing discipline over the powerful Federation, including orders to halt the fratricidal war with the MNA.[10] The Comité in Germany almost certainly gave way to this pressure and took a more conciliatory stance towards the Évian negotiations while agreeing to an order for a temporary abandonment of 'spectacular attacks against the security forces'.[11]

One of the great puzzles about the crisis of 1961 is why the Paris FLN, which had initially obeyed the order of the Comité fédéral to halt attacks on the security forces, took the unprecedented unilateral step of resuming an offensive. Papon, the French government, and, more recently, the historian Jean-Paul Brunet,[12] held the FLN responsible for launching a campaign to assassinate officers that triggered a cycle of violence culminating in 17 October 1961. This interpretation requires careful inspection.

On 27 August 1961 and again on 16 September the Comité fédéral wrote to Mohamed Zouaoui, the *responsable fédéral* and overall head of operations in Paris,[13] demanding 'to know what principle or order gives you the right to shoot

[8] Redha Malek, *L'Algérie à Évian* (Paris: Seuil, 1995), 127–34.

[9] *L'Express* (13 July 1961), 'Terrorisme: Trêves de fait?'; Stora, *Ils venaient d'Algérie*, 367–8.

[10] APP-HA56, SCINA *Synthèses quotidiennes* (10 Aug. 1961); *L'Express* (13 July 1961) reported that leaders of the French Federation had been called to Tunis and disciplined for attacks on security forces in Paris, 'initiatives that went beyond their orders'.

[11] APP-HA47, SCINA, Minutes 5 July 1961.

[12] Brunet, *Police contre FLN*, 82, 334, 338.

[13] Einaudi, *La Bataille de Paris*, 57–62, has identified Mohammedi Saddek as head of the FLN in Paris but newly opened archives indicate that Mohamed Zouaoui was *responsable fédéral* and in charge of planning the 17 Oct. demonstration: see MacMaster and House, 'La Fédération de France'.

ordinary policemen?' No reply was forthcoming and Ali Haroun wrote again from the Comité on 7 October ordering 'all attacks against the police' to cease. Haroun insisted that detailed reports be provided 'as quickly as possible . . . on the police brought down, the circumstances, the reasons, names and places'. He also wanted a detailed report on 'the way you are liquidating the *harkis*', especially by one Djafar, and noted that winning over the *harkis* to engage in mass desertion or other 'spectacular political action . . . would be much more profitable than acts of vengeance on poor misled characters'.[14] Although Zouaoui ordered the Paris commandos to cease attacks on ordinary *gardiens de la paix*, which they did from 4 October onwards, he still failed to provide a report to the Comité, which became increasingly irritated by his stonewalling. On 17 October Haroun wrote, 'For your information, public opinion is against us and does not understand the attacks against ordinary policemen. Your silence on this matter and especially your lack of information as to the real reasons for these attacks is a major cause of the unanimous disapproval by the French public of our actions.'[15]

Zouaoui's failure to reply appears to have been caused by the fact that the wave of assassinations had been initiated at a lower level of the FLN hierarchy, quite possibly by the heads of the two Paris *wilayas* who controlled the activities of the local Groupes armés (GA), and he had some difficulty in either reining in lower level activists or getting reports from the *wilaya* heads that could be sent back to Germany. Reliable information on the clandestine activities of the ultra-secretive armed groups is inevitably scarce, but the arrest and interrogation by Montaner of a key GA liaison officer on 23 September 1961 enabled the police to arrest a large number of FLN commandos and to piece together the organizational structure.[16]

From late 1960 through to early August 1961 the twenty-eight armed groups in the Paris region were placed under a much stricter political control by the *wilaya* heads and the FLN hierarchy. But from 15 August 1961 the GA commandos assumed more autonomy of action and resumed attacks on the *harkis* and, two weeks later, on police officers. The coordinated attacks by armed groups during the five weeks between 29 August and 3 October suggests that there must have been a degree of planning at some higher level of command.[17] The first wave of attacks (15 August to 15 September) was, with one exception, located north of the Seine (22 attacks out of 23), while a second wave (16 September to 3 October)

[14] *Sou'al*, 7 (1987), 71–3, directives of Ali Haroun from the private archive of Mohammed Harbi. Further copies of the Haroun–Zouaoui correspondence were seized by the police during 'Opération Flore' on 9–10 Nov. 1961 and are located in APP-H1B35, H1B19, H1B20, and H1B21.

[15] *Sou'al*, 82: Directives complémentaires, 17 Oct. 1961.

[16] APP-H1B12, Director of SCAA to Papon (n.d.), details the arrest of 26 members of the GA; APP-H1B18, Minutes of interrogation of Halim Sadi* at Fort Noisy, 10 Oct. 1961. A condition of special access to the archives (*dérogation*) is that personal information relating to named individuals must not be divulged: in these instances we have used a pseudonym, as here, marked by an asterisk.

[17] APP-HA68, Director of SCAA to Papon, 4 Oct. 1961, noted that the 28 armed groups in the Paris region 'seem to be activated one after the other according to a prearranged plan'.

was taken up by the new *wilaya* 1 south of the river.[18] The history of the FLN in Paris shows that on occasions the Federal leadership had faced some difficulty in imposing control on small armed bands composed of toughs with underworld links to prostitution or engaged in tribal vendettas, but in 1961 the resumption of attacks on the police was not the work of isolated rogue armed units but was controlled from above, probably from the *wilaya* level. The archival evidence suggests that the wave of anti-police violence which went directly against the orders of the GPRA was supported widely and at most, if not all, levels within the Paris FLN. Mohammedi Saddek was probably typical of most leading militants who favoured the resumption of armed action against the police after 15 August 1961. Georges Lepage, who provided Saddek with a safe-house in Vitry, remonstrated with him: 'It's not normal that you bring down some lad standing outside a police station . . . It's badly received by the people and even by some of those who support you.'[19]

Superficially it would appear, as Papon and Jean-Paul Brunet have argued, that the FLN activists in Paris descended into a brutal and gratuitous violence that came as second nature to hardened 'terrorists', also that they share prime responsibility for initiating the savagery that led directly into 17 October. But there was more to the wave of police assassinations than the wayward 'indiscipline' of Saddek and other FLN cadres and at least three factors determined them to resume the attacks and to pursue the perilous line of opposing Federal directives.

First, while the FLN in Paris observed the unofficial ceasefire from 5 June to 15 August, Papon and his officers, far from respecting the truce, surreptitiously seized the opportunity to deepen their campaign of violent repression. The decision to withdraw the *harkis* from their bases in central Paris to the HQ at Fort Noisy on 27–8 June was offered as a gage of good intent during the Évian talks, but Mohamed Ghafir, a senior member of the FLN in Paris, noted: 'But, for us, the relocation of the *harkis* made no difference to their activities which, on the contrary, were intensified and extended to the whole of Paris and the suburbs.' He detailed a series of violent police operations, particularly by the *harkis*, during the month of July in the left-bank 5th, 14th, and 15th arrondissements.[20] The police archives confirm Ghafir's analysis: even before the *harkis* were recalled to Fort Noisy, Montaner and the SCAA, clearly smarting from this humiliating withdrawal, had planned a series of punitive 'surprise-operations' against the FLN enclaves.[21]

The unanimous opinion of the militants in Ghafir's zone was that armed actions against the police should be resumed, or at the very least that the FLN

[18] This pattern is confirmed by a list of GA armed attacks for Sept. 1961 sent by *wilaya* 1 to the Federal Committee: reprinted in Haroun, *La 7è Wilaya*, 412.

[19] Einaudi, *La Bataille de Paris*, 66–7.

[20] Mohamed Ghafir, *Rapport sur la répression*, July 1961, quoted in Einaudi, *Octobre 1961*, 72–3.

[21] APP-HA86, Director of SCAA to Papon, 23 and 26 June, supporting Montaner's proposal to use Noisy as a base for mobile, punitive operations; also APP-H1B12, daily *ordres d'opération* for the deployment of the Fort Noisy *harkis* during Aug.–Sept. 1961.

hierarchy should explain to the rank and file why the commandos had been suspended. Ghafir noted that militants were perfectly aware of the decision of the GPRA to halt offensive operations in France so as to influence French and international public opinion, but they felt this had played into the hands of Papon. 'This is why repression has doubled in recent weeks in order to provoke us and to test our reaction', but Paris militants were in favour of relaunching attacks to show Papon 'that our organisation is strong and will never weaken whatever the strength of the police'.[22] Other zones in Paris also pressed for a resumption of action and one leader in Nanterre claimed that suffering further humiliation, standing with 'arms folded' in the face of police aggression, was leading to disaffection of the militant base: 'We demand that an order be given for counter-repression and to arm all GA units.'[23]

A second consideration of the FLN in Paris was that standing down armed groups at this particular juncture of the war risked a loss of political control over the mass of Algerians. The FLN, while it had the active support of the majority in Paris, had to maintain a constant iron grip, especially on those desperately poor workers who found the monthly contribution of 3,000 francs a considerable burden. Police intelligence reports during the summer of 1961 noted that the negotiations at Évian and the prospect of imminent peace were leading to a premature demobilization of the rank and file who no longer saw any point in making the huge personal sacrifice that leaders continued to demand.[24] The position of Paris cadres in July 1961 was identical to that of the Comité fédéral a year earlier when, as has been seen, it had resisted the GPRA order for a ceasefire on the grounds that it would unleash a savage police repression and generate 'a relaxing of vigilance, the creation of a kind of dangerous euphoria which will immobilize our masses when, faced with the almost certain risk of failed negotiations, it would be advisable to galvanize them'.[25]

Thirdly, in a meeting of the supreme governing body of the FLN, the National Council (CNRA), held in Tripoli from 9 to 27 August, the moderate President Ferhat Abbas was replaced by Benyoucef Ben Khedda. The new president was widely reported to be in favour of negotiating with the French from a position of strength, if necessary involving a deepening of the revolutionary struggle. There was a long-lasting and bitter division within the highest levels of the FLN between the 'internals', those who thought that political power should lie with the revolutionary masses inside Algeria, and the 'externals', consisting of the colonels and politicians located in HQ in Tunisia, Morocco, and elsewhere. This division was, to a certain extent, reproduced in a split between those who argued that the Comité fédéral should have remained inside France, close to the people and

[22] Mohamed Ghafir, *Rapport sur la répression*, July 1961.
[23] Einaudi, *La Bataille de Paris*, 62.
[24] APP-HA88, SCAA report, *Sur un changement d'orientation de la tactique du FLN*, 23 Aug. 1961.
[25] Haroun, *La 7è Wilaya*, 428. Report of the *Comité fédéral*, 23 June 1960, appendix, 501–2.

sharing its dangers, and the group led by Omar Boudaoud which won the 1958 battle for 'external' relocation in Germany.[26] There are indications that the FLN in Paris, faced with the daily threat of arrest and torture, felt some resentment towards a leadership ensconced in the relative luxury of Cologne and towards the imposition of orders that were not based on a first-hand experience of conditions among the immigrants in France.[27] Ben Khedda was a powerful voice in support of the predominance of the 'interior' and of the 'political' over the 'military/bureaucratic' line. It seems likely that the Paris militants and armed commandos, who disagreed with orders from the Comité fédéral to respect a ceasefire, expected a change in direction after Ben Khedda was elected by the CNRA on 27 August and were prepared to jump the gun by immediately reopening armed attacks on police officers in Paris.

It is important to recognize that the apparent defiance of the Paris FLN towards the Comité fédéral was furtive, concealed by the slowness of internal commmunications, and short-lived. But this brief defiance reinforced the decision of the Comité to impose absolute discipline during the demonstration planned for 17 October. Mohammedi Saddek was called across the Belgian border on about 10 October for a meeting with Omar Boudaoud, who emphasized that there would be no armed riposte to police violence and that anybody found on the demonstration 'even with so much as a safety-pin on them will be condemned to death!'[28] The pacific and quiescent form of the demonstration, which included numerous women and children, was to create the conditions by which unsuspecting FLN supporters were particularly vulnerable and unprepared for the terrible violence unleashed by the police.

PAPON TURNS THE SCREW

Papon reacted to the resumption of FLN attacks on 29 August with cold fury and the following day he dispatched an angry letter to Jean Poupaert, Director of the SCAA, criticizing the intelligence service for failing to predict the new FLN offensive.[29] From this moment, down to the events of October, the Prefect of Police unleashed a wave of remorseless terror against the Algerian immigrants. Chapter 2 has already examined the system of repression that was put in place by the SCAA–SAT officers between 1958 and 1961, including daily street stop-and-search or large-scale sweep operations, internment, and forced repatriation to Algeria, expulsion from FLN bastion-hotels (Operation 'Osmose'), destruction of

[26] On the purge of the group that opposed Boudaoud on the Comité fédéral in early 1958, see Harbi, *Une vie debout*, 203–23.

[27] APP-HA56, SCINA *Synthèses quotidiennes*, 1500 (10 Aug. 1961), reported lower level militants were hostile to the Federal leaders, 'who having taken refuge in West Germany were ignorant of the day-to-day difficulties faced by the mass of Muslims in the metropolis'.

[28] Einaudi, *La Bataille de Paris*.

[29] APP-HA88, Poupaert's spirited reply to Papon, 31 Aug. 1961.

cafés and property, investment of Algerian enclaves by *harki* units, extreme levels of physical assault and torture, and various forms of economic damage, from closure of businesses to loss of employment through repeated arrest and debilitating injury. During the two months that culminated in 17 October Papon continued to deploy the same methods, except that the intensity of operations was deepened and carried out by officers who, enraged by FLN assassinations, were prepared to descend even further into illegality. However, there were three elements of repression that assumed particular importance during this phase and which are examined next: the acceleration of refoulement, a campaign of terror against the *bidonvilles*, and the imposition of a night-time curfew.

On 5 September, Papon sent an important directive to the heads of SCAA and the Municipal Police which, in response to the FLN attacks, outlined a package of measures to 'relaunch a strong offensive in all sectors and to harass the FLN *Organisation politico-administrative*'. One of these measures included an immediate campaign to round up 'undesirable' Algerians who were either unemployed, residents of café-hotels regarded as FLN bastions, or operated as petty criminals (pimps) and to undertake a mass weekly refoulement to Algeria.[30] Clearly, such a measure was intended less to remove FLN cadres than to play upon one of the most vulnerable points of the immigrant community, the fear of losing employment in France. Once again the concept of collective retribution came to the fore as Papon announced to the press that the first convoy was a riposte to the assassination of the brigadier Pierre Grandjouan on 3 September and that a certain number of Algerians would be sent back each time there was an attack.[31]

The second measure that Papon dictated was for the *harkis* to be implanted 'for several days in the most sensitive zones or neighbourhoods of Paris to carry out in-depth operations', an order that discreetly reversed the decision to withdraw the FPA to Fort Noisy. To this was added an extremely disquieting order which, through an alteration to the normal rules of engagement, seemed to provide a licence to shoot on sight: 'Members of [FLN] armed commandos caught in the act of crime should be shot on the spot by the police forces.'[32] On 4 October the Director of SCAA gave a detailed account of how during the previous month he had implemented Papon's instruction for 'tough operations'. Among these was the destruction of several 'FLN bastions' by an 'Osmose' operation which removed the entire population of certain hotels to other locations. But most significant was the secretive redeployment of *harki* units of about a hundred men each into fixed bases at 51 rue des Cités in Aubervilliers from 5 to 14 September and then at 278 Avenue de la République in Nanterre from 19 to 25 September.[33]

[30] APP-HA110, Papon to Director of SCAA and Director General of Municipal Police, 5 Sept. 1961. APP-HA111, Somveille to Directeur général de la Sûreté nationale, 20 Nov. 1961, notes that 2,472 men were returned to Algeria between 11 Sept. and 20 Nov. 1961.

[31] *Le Monde* (5 Sept. 1961).

[32] APP-HA110, Papon to Director SCAA and Director General of Municipal Police, 5 Sept. 1961.

[33] APP-HA68, Report from Director of SCAA to Papon, 4 Oct. 1961.

From these temporary centres the FPA carried out daily repressive sorties in the neighbourhood.

Within less than twenty-four hours of their installation in Aubervilliers on 6 September, a ten-man squad of *harkis* invaded a hotel in the rue de l'Union and arrested an FLN fund collector who had been recently released from the detention camp of Larzac. On 11 September his body, with fatal bullet wounds, was recovered from the Ourcq Canal.[34] From the 5 September onwards over 500 men were arrested each day, controlled at the CIV and, in some cases, interned in camps or deported to Algeria.[35] In a letter of 11 October the senior surgeon of the Hôpital Franco-Musulman at Bobigny wrote to Papon stating that for several weeks Algerians had been hospitalized with terrible injuries caused by the *harkis*, including 'multiple bruises . . . broken ribs, serious damage to the sexual organs. One of them had been picked up in the highway with a ruptured intestine.'[36]

An extraordinary feature of these operations was that Papon, ever keen to produce statistics to prove the success of his anti-FLN campaign, set target quotas for arrest, internment, and deportation, even when there existed a lack of incriminating evidence against individuals.[37]

ANTI-*BIDONVILLES* REPRESSION

On the 19 September the company of one hundred *harkis* was transferred to 278 Avenue de la République situated near the huge *bidonvilles* of Nanterre and from where they engaged in daily repressive operations and harassment of North Africans. During the 1960s the Interior Ministry recorded 46,827 individuals living in the squalid *bidonvilles* of the Paris region. By far the biggest concentration was in the industrial commune of Nanterre which had thirteen shanty-town settlements and a population of over 8,000, about half of which was made up of women and children.[38] Nanterre was to play a particularly important role in the events of 1961.[39] Despite the appalling slum conditions, Algerian immigrants were able to reconstitute family units and strong kin and regional solidarities which provided the basis for a culture of resistance and the most fervent FLN militancy. The *bidonvilles*, an impenetrable warren of lanes, provided a natural

[34] Brunet, *Police contre FLN*, 68.

[35] *Le Monde* (7, 10–11, 15, 20, 24–5 Sept.). APP-HA68, Director of SCAA to Papon, 4 Oct., reports 15, 414 identity controls during Sept.

[36] Brunet, *Police contre FLN*, 68, 65.

[37] Paul Thibaud, 'Avant les manifestations', *Vérité-Liberté*, 13 (Nov. 1961); Monique Hervo, *Chroniques du bidonville*: *Nanterre en guerre d'Algérie 1959–1962* (Paris: Seuil, 2001), 188; Brunet, *Police contre FLN*, 91, 336.

[38] Abelmalek Sayad and Éliane Dupuy, *Un Nanterre algérien, terre de bidonvilles* (Paris: Éditions Autrement, 1995); Monique Hervo and Marie-Ange Charras, *Bidonvilles, l'enlisement* (Paris: Maspero, 1971); Ahmed El Gharbaoui, 'Les Travailleurs maghrébins immigrés dans la banlieue nord-est de Paris', *Revue de géographie du Maroc*, 19 (1971), 3–56.

[39] Muriel Cohen, 'Les Algériens des bidonvilles de Nanterre pendant la guerre d'Algérie: Histoire et mémoire', mémoire de maîtrise, (Université de Paris-I, 2003).

redoubt for FLN militants, a place in which arms and documents could be concealed, while leaders could avoid police raids by escaping through secret exits or by constantly moving residence between townships.[40] It was from Nanterre that the biggest column of demonstrators marched on central Paris on the 17 October, only to be met by police gunfire at the Pont de Neuilly. Papon and Montaner had a particular wish to break the spirit of militants in this fortress of Algerian nationalism, and to this end engaged in an unprecedented wave of terror that sought to sap the morale of the community.

This repression assumed a multiplicity of forms, of which one of the most terrifying was large-scale night operations, planned with military precision. In two vast operations code-named 'Janine' and 'Barnabé', and carried out over a two-day period (10–12 June), police and *harki* forces under Montaner sealed off the most 'virulent' FLN sectors in Puteaux, Nanterre, and Suresnes.[41] Monique Hervo, who witnessed the operation, describes how fifteen police vans arrived with *harki* squads and Alsatian dogs at the *bidonvilles* of La Folie and between 11 p.m. and 4 a.m., lit up by huge arc-lights, smashed in doors and searched every hut. The men were brutally hauled out at the point of the machine-gun, before the eyes of terrified women and children, and lined up hands on head—many still in pyjamas—before being arrested and taken away.[42]

Monique Hervo, who from 1959 worked daily as a social worker within the Nanterre *bidonvilles* and also lived permanently there at the height of the repression, has provided a detailed eyewitness account of how similar operations began to intensify throughout July to October, some of them directed on the spot by Montaner. By September, and especially after the *harkis* occupied the hotel in the rue Nationale, the armed patrols into La Folie occurred daily and a war of attrition was undertaken in which doors were constantly broken down, property and money stolen, men beaten, grocery shops gutted, the tyres of cars, bicycles, and mobylettes slashed, and identity papers torn up. Vans making deliveries of milk and produce were turned away, as were ambulances, and the delivery of mail blocked. SAT officers refused to replace destroyed identity cards on the pretext that the *bidonvilles* constituted a 'non-lieu' in which an address could not be recognized as a fixed abode: these men were then arrested by patrols for lack of identification. It became so dangerous for men to be in the street that only women and children did the shopping, while many workers began to sleep overnight in factories, hiding up behind machinery or in bolt holes. Constant irruption of police squads into the *bidonvilles* at night, under the glare of brilliant lights, led to a deepening physical exhaustion. The constant arrest of men for identity controls

[40] Hervo, *Chroniques*, 43, 58, 60, 124; Neil MacMaster, 'Shantytown Republics: Algerian Migrants and the Culture of Space in the Bidonvilles', in David G. Troyansky, Patricia M. E. Lorcin, and Hafid Gafaiti (eds.), *Transnational Spaces and Identities in the Francophone World* (forthcoming, University of Nebraska Press).

[41] APP-H1B28, Operation Janine and Barnabé; APP-HB14, Operation Janine.

[42] Hervo, *Chroniques*, 127–9; *Témoignage chrétien* (7 July 1961), 2.

and their incarceration at Vincennes (CIV) seriously damaged the income of desperately poor families: many were fired by employers, while wives were often left for days or weeks not knowing where husbands and sons had 'disappeared'.[43] Two final turns of the screw in this infernal scenario came with the arrival of the 'Z' squads and the night curfew.

During the Algeria War the French government became concerned to combat Algerian nationalism by improving social and economic conditions, and a prime target here was the dissolution of the *bidonvilles* through the Fonds d'action sociale (1958) and the construction of worker hostels, temporary housing estates (*cités de transit*), and council flats (HLM).[44] However, once again a social welfare programme became distorted under the pressure of policing objectives and the planned liquidation of the shanty towns provided an instrument of repression in the hands of the Prefecture of Police. On 11 August 1961 a new police unit, the so-called 'Z-brigade', which consisted of men in boiler-suits armed with sledge-hammers and crow-bars, protected by uniformed police with machine-guns, entered La Folie and demolished newly constructed huts or extensions, making numerous families homeless. Social workers who tried to find out who was responsible for the actions met a stonewall of official silence, but throughout August to October demolition teams came on a daily basis into the shanty towns, creating a climate of deep insecurity and fear. It would seem that destruction of huts was being systematically used as another form of repression, a 'disciplinary' mechanism similar to that which had been deployed against nationalist bastions in the *bidonvilles* of colonial Morocco and Algeria.[45]

THE CURFEW OF 5 OCTOBER

The final measure put into place by Papon, and for many the most controversial, was agreed at a meeting of the Conseil interministériel on 5 October 1961. This instituted a curfew for all Algerians between 8.30 p.m. and 5.30 a.m., while their cafés were to close by seven in the evening, and any individuals moving about by car would be subjected to control and have their vehicle impounded for checks. A further circular dated 7 October explained how this would function:[46] those Algerians who needed to travel to or from work during the curfew would need to get a form from their employer stamped

[43] Hervo, *Chroniques*, 158–98; see also extracts from the diary of the social worker Brigitte Gall in Einaudi, *Octobre 1961*, 239–40.

[44] Vincent Viet, *La France immigrée: Construction d'une politique, 1914–1997* (Paris: Fayard, 1998), 200–17.

[45] On the 'Z-brigades' see Hervo, *Chroniques*, 145–55; Hervo and Charras, *Bidonvilles*, 370–86; Brahim Benaïcha, *Vivre au paradis: D'une oasis à un bidonville* (Paris: Desclée de Brouwer, 1999 edn.), 49, 196.

[46] On the Conseil of 5 Oct. see *Le Monde* (7 Oct.); the orders of 5 and 7 Oct. are in APP-HA110; and also Einaudi, *La Bataille de Paris*, appendix, 299–301.

by the nearest SAT bureau and by mid-November some 14,000 such permits had been issued.[47]

A similar curfew had been introduced by Papon on 3 September 1958, shortly after the FLN opened a 'second front' in France, but appears to have quickly fallen into abeyance, perhaps because the Prefect had not yet had time to establish the policing apparatus that could enforce it effectively.[48] The 1961 curfew, however, met with considerable public opposition on the grounds that Algerians were citizens under the Constitution and could not be made the target of an exceptional discriminatory order that radically undermined the official policy of assimilation and equality for Algerians, a major plank for the retention of French power in the colony. Thirty Algerian deputies, led by the conservative Djebbour, denounced the 'vexatious, discriminatory, if not racist, measures'.[49] There was also a campaign led by the Confédération générale du travail (CGT), and even the minority MNA affiliate, the Union des syndicats des travailleurs algériens (USTA), at the Renault car plant from 4 October onwards against the curfew and mounting police racism.[50]

Papon's administrative order had no legal status and to avoid the charge of illegality he issued a communiqué which 'advised most urgently . . . to abstain from movement at night', although in reality the police treated the order as mandatory and a means for further harassment.[51] While Papon and Frey claimed that the measure was intended to counter FLN terrorist groups operating against the police and to disrupt the collection of funds, once again it provided an instrument for the intimidation of the whole Algerian community. The need for a pass forced 14,000 men to have recourse to the SAT bureaux, where they were duly subjected to further *fiche* indexing, while the permit provided no guarantee of safety to night workers who continued to be intercepted, beaten savagely, and hauled off to the CIV.

By September and October 1961 the campaign of harassment against the Algerian community had become so remorseless that the great majority of immigrant workers was ready to seize any opportunity to break the stranglehold of terror and humiliation in which they were locked. It is in this light that the organization and support for the demonstrations of 17–20 October need to be interpreted. After 17 October numerous journalists and commentators for the first time visited and 'discovered' the *bidonvilles*: although they were initially interested in finding out the truth about the bloody repression on 17 October, they were all shocked by revelations of the extent to which Algerians had been subjected for many months to a sustained and pitiless campaign of terror. When the writer Marguerite Duras asked an Algerian worker for a word that would summarize

[47] APP-HA110, *Note au sujet des restrictions de circulation de nuit*, 15 Nov. 1961.
[48] *Le Monde* (3 Sept. 1958). [49] *Le Monde* (8–9, 10 Oct.).
[50] APP-HA110, Communiqué of the Union des syndicats de la Seine CGT, 7 Oct.; USTA tract, 9 Oct. 1961.
[51] Communiqué of 5 Oct. in *Le Monde* (6 Oct.), and in Einaudi, *La Bataille de Paris*, 85.

his life he replied, 'I think I can give an exact answer: terrorized. We lead a terrorized life.'[52] Internal FLN reports dating from September and early October 1961 also confirm a powerful sense of the ferocity of the police during this period, remarkable even compared to the daily racism and violence of earlier years. In a report of 24 September a militant wrote, 'What rage! All this must be stopped. We have to find a means, a solution to halt or at least impede this murderous and destructive repression… What can we do? There is a solution! It must be found as quickly as possible!'[53] Ordinary Algerians in later years frequently recounted that a primary reason for demonstrating on 17 October was to break the circle of terror imposed by the intolerable and degrading apparatus that Papon had put in place. The marchers set out for the central boulevards with an unmistakable sense of release and of pride in their ability to assert their dignity as Algerian patriots—a pride that Papon and his lieutenants found insufferable and were determined to punish.

REPRESSION AND THE ASSAULT ON THE RULE OF LAW

The synchronized attacks by the FLN from 29 August onwards generated a climate of deepening insecurity, tension, and anger in the Paris police force. The elaborate funeral ceremonies held in the Prefecture courtyard became so frequent and demoralizing that Papon even sought to terminate the tradition.[54] Papon came under growing pressure from the police trade unions for better protection and at first the Prefect responded by increasing repressive measures against the Algerian community (mass arrests, accelerated refoulement, deployment of *harkis*). However, the assassinations continued and the main police union, the Syndicat général de la police (SGP), under intense pressure from its members, eventually sent a delegation to confer with Papon on 2 October.[55] The SGP, clearly unhappy with the outcome, then took the exceptional measure of forming a Comité permanent de défense with three other police unions on 4 October and this was able to gain meetings with Papon on 5 October and with Roger Frey, the Interior Minister, on 10 October.[56] In general Papon and Frey were supportive of the demands of the Committee, which included a range of measures from

[52] *France-Observateur* (9 Nov. 1961), 9. Other reports on the *bidonvilles* uncovered a similar picture: see Eve Dessarre, *France-Observateur* (26 Oct.); Michel Legris, *Le Monde* (27 Oct.); Jean Carta, *Témoignage chrétien* (27 Oct.); Abbé Depierre, *Témoignages et documents*, 32 (Nov. 1961); Paul Thibaud, *Vérité-Liberté* (13 Nov. 1961).

[53] Amiri, *La Bataille*, 127, quoting from Haroun Archives Fédération de France, *Saint-Ouen, Rapport de la répression policière*, 25 Sept. 1961.

[54] Archives SGP-FO, Commission administrative (CA), Minutes 15 Sept. 1961, 17.

[55] See *Police parisienne SGP*, Communiqué fédéral 19 (7 Sept. 1961) and 20 (4 Oct. 1961) in Archives SGP-FO.

[56] Archives SGP-FO, *Comité permanent de défense*, Communiqué 1 (6 Oct. 1961) and 2 (n.d.).

increasing the budget to finance more arms, cars, and bulletproof vests to intensifying street controls on Algerians and changing the law to deal more harshly with FLN gun-men.[57] However, a fundamental difference was soon to emerge between the two sides: while union leaders wished to use these measures to release the volcanic pressures building up within the force and to prevent a slide into illegal violence, Papon made the catastrophic mistake of seeming to encourage and assure protection for such acts.

To understand how and why Papon came to accept police coercion requires an examination of his longer term frustration with a legal system which he constantly berated for being totally ill-adapted to the war on terrorism. Papon shared an opinion current in military circles in Algeria that where the survival of the state was itself fundamentally at risk then it was legitimate to cast aside liberal laws that were only suited to peacetime conditions, an opinion that opened the door to arbitrary violence.[58] The police were 'greatly handicapped by the serious deficiencies of judicial repression: inadequate sentences, failure to adapt the Penal Code and the Code of Criminal Procedure, the impunity of the FLN lawyers, failure to execute those sentenced to death, and loss of control of the prisons'.[59] As noted in Chapter 1, as early as July 1958 Papon had launched a campaign against the restrictions which he felt that French procedure placed on efficient repressive actions, especially when compared with the system that had been refined in Algeria. From 1958 until the end of the war Papon maintained a constant pressure on the Interior Minister and Minister of Justice to facilitate repression through the introduction of draconian laws and police procedure.

Papon found some success with the introduction of the *ordonnance* of 7 October 1958 which extended to metropolitan France *assignation à résidence* or administrative detention without trial, the key instrument in the destruction of fundamental legal rights and which opened the door to torture, summary executions, and disappearances.[60] However, by early 1960 Papon was undoubtedly influenced by the draconian Algerian decree of 12 February 1960 which eliminated the *instruction*, the normal procedure of investigation and gathering of proof by the state prosecutor (*procureur*), and placed those arrested before military courts and a rapid and severe expeditive justice.[61] By May 1960 Papon was placing pressure on Frey for an identical system and a fast-track procedure which would only take one week from the moment of arrest to sentencing by a military tribunal.[62] Although this proposal came into force as the *ordonnance*

[57] Frey confirmed the special measures in a speech to the National Assembly on 13 Oct., see *Le Monde* (15–16 Oct.).

[58] Papon, *Les Chevaux du pouvoir*, 376–8.

[59] APP-HA65, *Conseil interministériel*, 21 Jan. 1960, fiche no. 9.

[60] On the *ordonnance* of 7 Oct. 1958 see Thénault, *Une drôle de justice*, 34–8, 239; Heymann, *Les Libertés publiques*, 159–61.

[61] On the decree of 12 Feb. 1960 see Thénault, *Une drôle de justice*, 199–235.

[62] APP-HA107, Papon to Minister of Interior, 9 May 1960. The Prefect admitted that this solution 'would dramatically change the present judicial rules' (emphasis in the original).

of 3 June 1960,[63] Papon remained constantly dissatisfied with the legal system which he viewed as a fetter on the ability of his officers to crush terrorist organizations.[64]

Emmanuel Blanchard has argued that the director of the Police judiciaire (PJ), Max Fernet, strongly resisted Papon's attempt to draw his service, which included the BAV, into 'dirty operations' against the FLN, a resistance that was based on a desire to protect the prestigious status of the PJ within the police hierarchy and its traditions of professionalism and expert training in penal procedure.[65] Roger Le Taillanter, a commissaire in the BAV, resisted pressure to engage in forms of interrogation and torture with which Papon would have been familiar from the Constantinois, 'The judicial rigour of our Parisian methods might have appeared rather old-fashioned to him [Papon]'.[66] Papon and the SCAA attempted to get around this impediment by creating the *harki* brigade, a quasi-military unit operating outside police regulations and the checks of the penal code. However, the public scandal surrounding revelations of *harki* torture in the spring of 1961 and government pressure to rein in the FPA meant that Papon continued to rankle at the constraints of the legal system.

Papon's frustration was further compounded by the constant opposition of Edmond Michelet, the liberal Minister of Justice. Michelet favoured negotiations with the FLN and surrounded himself with aides (Joseph Rovan, Gaston Gosselin, Hervé Bourges) who had close links with the French anti-war movement and its journal *Témoignage chrétien*.[67] Michelet, who presented a barrier to Papon's constant manœuvres to undermine due process, complained in March 1961 to the Prime Minister that telephones in the Ministry of Justice were being tapped by Papon, whom he accused of acting in a particularly hostile and arbitrary manner.[68] In April 1961 a major row broke out because the police were arresting and secretly detaining FLN suspects without the knowledge of the courts and Michelet attacked these practices in a note to the Interior Minister which was read out in a meeting of the SCINA attended by top brass from the major intelligence and police services.[69] Michelet's fears were well-founded: in January 1961 a SCAA report detailed how operations by the police and *harkis* against the FLN, in order to be effective, had to be carried out illegally in the face of 'a juridical formalism that was ridiculously ill-equipped to fight the Organisation [OPA]'. The Prefecture recognized that such operations, which were not dissimilar to those carried out by paratroopers during the Battle of Algiers, could not lead to the trial of those arrested, since this would expose the illegality of such procedures in court.[70] This

[63] On the *ordonnance* of 3 June 1960 see Heymann, *Les Libertés publiques*, 184–5; Stora, *Ils venaient d'Algérie*, 294–5.
[64] APP-HA65, Papon to Minister of Justice, 20 Sept. 1961.
[65] Emmanuel Blanchard, 'Les Brigades des agressions et violences (BAV)'.
[66] Roger Le Taillanter, '*Le Grand': Ma vie de flic* (Paris: Plon, 1995), 97–8.
[67] Einaudi, *La Bataille de Paris*, 28–9.
[68] Letter from Michelet to Debré, 23 Mar. 1961, in Faivre, *Conflits d'autorités*, 67–8.
[69] APP-HA47, SCINA meeting, 5 Apr. 1961.
[70] APP-H1B13, SCAA report *Au sujet des opérations effectuées par la FPA en janvier 1961*.

dispute had broken out in the context of the deepening public controversy over *harki* violence and torture and a ministerial meeting was held on 10 April to resolve the issue. Debré, supported by the Interior Minister, arbitrated in Papon's favour so that Algerians could be interned for fifteen days without the state prosecutor being informed, a decision that gave the police considerable scope for arbitrary repression during its operations.[71] Finally, Debré who as a hard-line advocate of *Algérie française* detested Michelet, put sufficient pressure on De Gaulle that Michelet was sacked on 24 August, thus removing a major impediment to the further erosion of the legal system.[72]

The removal of Michelet and his replacement by the far more compliant Bernard Chenot just five days before the resumption of FLN attacks came at an opportune moment for Papon. The Prefect, in reassuring SGP delegates of his plans to crack down on FLN terrorists, remarked 'that he was satisfied that the Minister of Justice had been changed and that he hoped now to obtain what he could not from the previous one'.[73] As the police crisis deepened Papon once again pushed for a change in law and on 20 September wrote to Chenot with a proposal for fast-track and expeditive prosecution by military tribunals.[74] However, it quickly became apparent to Papon that the Gaullist government either could not bring about legal change fast enough to cope with the immediate police crisis or was not willing, in the context of ongoing negotiations with the GPRA, to go down such a public route towards repression.[75]

At this moment Papon's bitter frustration with what he perceived to be a spineless legal system came to a head and, faced with explosive tensions within the police force, he gave a green light for violent repression of the FLN. On 28 September the FLN assassinated yet another officer, Demoën, and during his funeral ceremony on 2 October Papon, enraged by his failure to stop the FLN in its tracks, temporarily lost his usual icy self-control and discretion. As the Prefect pinned a medal on the coffin he publicly announced, 'For every blow received, we will render ten.'[76] Papon was here reiterating the *loi de talion* that was deployed by the army under his command in the Constantinois when it liquidated groups of ten hostages in reprisal for FLN actions.[77] The same afternoon Papon went on

[71] APP-HA84, meeting, 10 Apr. 1961.

[72] See the Debré–Michelet correspondence during 1959–61 in Faivre, *Conflits d'autorités*, 61–71; Joseph Rovan, 'Témoignage sur Edmond Michelet, Garde des Sceaux', in Jean-Pierre Rioux, *La Guerre d'Algérie et les Français*, 276–8.

[73] Archives SGP-FO, Conseil syndical gardiens, 3 Oct. 1961, 10.

[74] APP-HA65, Papon to Minister of Justice, 20 Sept. 1961.

[75] Papon's longer term failure to achieve his goals is indicated in APP-HA107, Papon to Interior Minister, 6 Jan. 1962, where in the last months of the war he raged at the interference of the Commission de sauvegarde and the block to the 'efficient' repressive actions of the police caused by 'an overly formal respect for judicial procedure ill-adapted to the circumstances' and a slow and complex procedure which was the cause of a certain failure (*échec*).

[76] *Le Monde* (3 Oct. 1961).

[77] Einaudi, *Octobre 1961*, 108, interview with Pierre-Alban Thomas, former head of the 2nd Bureau in Biskra, 7 Dec. 1998.

a tour of inspection of police stations in the 8th and 17th arrondissements and Montrouge in order to rally the morale of his forces. Trade union representatives impressed on Papon, who seemed to be out of touch with the state of opinion among the rank and file, that they were finding it increasingly difficult to retain control over their volatile members and to prevent them committing 'exactions' or forming their own vigilante commando groups.

In response to this Papon assumed a peculiarly ambiguous stance: while he recommended they should not employ illegal methods he at the same time spelt out in detail how he would 'cover' and take full responsibility for any officers who shot unarmed Algerians. A trade union witness noted:

> In the matter of arrests, he [Papon] gave us carte blanche. He said to us, 'as police officers you are not meant to be fighting a war of subversion: you are forced to confront a war of subversion and you should also be subversive in the war you lead against the other side'. He advised us to be vigilant and said that if we felt that we were in danger we should not hesitate but fire first; 'I give you my word, you will be covered. Moreover', he said, 'when you notify headquarters that a North African has been shot, the boss called to the scene has what is needed to make sure the North African has a weapon on him since, at the present time, there is no room for mistakes.'[78]

The planting of a weapon on the body of innocent Algerians who had been shot by the police was a widespread practice but it was unusual for the head of police to be himself accused of giving licence to such acts.[79]

The leading SGP trade unionists were deeply opposed to Papon's response to rank-and-file unrest. Delegates had repeatedly warned superior officers of the dangerous tension building up in the lower ranks but no action was taken and it was suspected that this was the intention of 'ultra' elements who were planning to destabilize the Gaullist regime. The SGP ideally wished to see a rapid negotiated end to the war, but in the interim looked to the Prefecture to introduce measures both to protect officers from FLN attacks as well as to reduce the tension that was building up. Delegates warned that they could no longer contain their men and it was feared that unleashing police violence could only serve to damage the very basis of a democratic trade union movement and the fragile Republican order. The delegate Georges Moulinet noted on 3 October that the union was facing a grave crisis since on the one hand his men claimed the SGP was doing nothing to protect them, while on the other, 'The Prefect goes down among the men and says almost in so-many words that we can kill North Africans . . . the bosses have told the ranks: After an attack you can bring down as many as you like! We must denounce this scandal and say that we have not obtained effective measures of protection.'[80] As will be seen in Chapter 6, uncontrolled police violence was to trigger, two weeks

[78] Archives SGP-FO, Conseil syndical gardiens, 3 Oct. 1961, 12–13.

[79] On witnesses to police killings and the planting of weapons, see Einaudi, *La Bataille de Paris*, 304–6.

[80] Archives SGP-FO, Conseil syndical gardiens, 3 Oct. 1961, 22.

after the events of 17 October, precisely the major crisis within the trade union that delegates had predicted.

How can Papon's contradictory stance on 'legality' be explained? His appeal to respect legality, which he had already made in a general bulletin to the force on 20 September, could be interpreted as a political public pronouncement to cover his own position. But there is a further logic underlying his cynical ambivalence: Papon throughout his career was a strict disciplinarian and any sign of disaffection by subordinates was rapidly and harshly dealt with as a threat to his personal authority. It seems likely that Papon would have viewed any drift towards unilateral or parallel police commando actions against Algerians as a threat to the police hierarchy and unitary lines of command, and also as threatening to stir up an uncontrollable political and media hornets nest. In appealing to 'legality' Papon was signalling that officers should always act within the official structure and that if there was to be any violent repression this should be a monopoly of 'La Maison'. When told by SGP delegates in the 8th arrondissement on 3 October 'that there was a danger that anti-terrorist commandos would be formed, the Prefect said that he was going to do this himself in such a way that their actions would retain a legal character'. Papon intimated that he had created 'an anti-terrorist service' that had already achieved remarkable successes that the SGP would not know about, and that he had taken measures that 'went beyond the bounds of legality'.[81] Nothing could have been made clearer.

THE MASSACRE BEGINS

To date most of the studies of the events of 1961 have tended to obscure the fact that more Algerian deaths occurred in the weeks prior to 17 October than during the mass demonstrations. A clearer understanding of the overall crisis can be gained if mass killings by the police are viewed as extending in a single phase over a period of about eight weeks, with a dramatic and more visible peak on 17–18 October. As the Mandelkern Report concluded, 'the events of 17 October can be inserted into a wider context than the day itself. It marks the peak of a phase of violence which began at the start of September and ended just after the demonstration.'[82] The complex issue of the overall number of Algerian deaths, and how these were concealed, is addressed in Chapter 6, but this section looks at the evidence of how the overall cycle of killings was initiated from 1 September onwards.

During September and October a large number of corpses of North Africans, many of them unidentifiable, were pulled from the Seine or from other canals and rivers in the Paris region. When Papon and his senior officers were challenged about these deaths their standard response was that the corpses could, without

[81] Archives SGP-FO, Conseil syndical gradés, 10 Oct. 1961, 26–7.
[82] Mandelkern Report, 17.

Table 2. Monthly judicial (*parquets*) statistics of North African deaths by violence, Paris 1961

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
12	14	11	12	16	11	3	7	37	105	15	3

Source: Géronimi Report, 18–19.

exception, be attributed to the bloody internecine conflict between the FLN and the MNA, or to the FLN execution of recalcitrant Algerians (refusal to pay dues, informers, drunkards). In numerous instances where bodies were recovered from the Seine after days or weeks of immersion, frequently with all signs of identification removed, it was impossible for coroners or detectives to discover who they were or where and how they had been killed and if they were victims of fellow Algerians or of the police. Indeed, this contingency was well known to the police since dozens of Algerian testimonies show that they were routinely threatened by the police with assassination that could be disguised as the work of the FLN. In one typical example Slimane Amirat, after he had been transferred in January 1961 from the Prefecture cells ('le Dépôt') to the *harki* base at 28 rue de la Goutte d'Or, was interrogated by Montaner, 'He said to me: "At the Dépôt you are registered as freed and I can lodge a bullet in your brain and put you in a sack with the words "traitor to the FLN". Then I will throw you in the Seine"'.[83] Could it be that such threats were simply that, a means of intimidation that the police never intended to execute? The Prefecture presented such FLN claims as a standard invention, a propaganda weapon to damage the police force. In this world of mirrors and obfuscation, of propaganda and counter-propaganda, the historian would seem to be faced with the impossible task of trying to uncover the truth through police archives that were falsified in their very constitution. However, there is a body of evidence which confirms that illegal police killings escalated after 1 September.

First, whenever corpses were found in open or public spaces in the Paris region they were in most instances transferred to the morgue or Institut médico-légal (IML) for an autopsy report and, where death seemed suspicious, a judicial inquiry was opened by the public prosecutor. The Géronimi Report which investigated the judicial archives relating to 17 October found for the whole of 1961 a total of 246 Algerians who had suffered a violent death (see Table 2).[84] Although this data is subject to criticism or qualification (see Chapter 6), it provides a sound guide to the overall pattern of violence, indicating a marked peak in September–October.

During September 1961 a growing number of senior police and government officials became concerned by a pattern of killing that was quite different from previous internecine Algerian violence. At a meeting of the national intelligence coordination committee (SCINA) on 4 October it was reported that a growing number of Algerian bodies had been found in the Seine and canals of Paris, not all

[83] Péju, *Les Harkis*, 52. [84] Géronimi Report, 18–19.

of which were a result of 'the settling of scores between *frontistes* [FLN] or between *frontistes* and *messalistes* [MNA]. It would appear then that counter-terrorism is insinuating itself into the Metropolis.'[85] Most astonishing was an unminuted intervention by the SCINA president, M. Rousseau, who,

> apparently expressing an almost general concern of the various delegates present at the graphic rise in political victims during the month, asked the representatives of the Prefecture of Police if the recent discovery of numerous Algerian corpses in the Seine, the Marne and the canals of the capital had some connection to the words of Mr. Papon, 'for each blow received we will return ten'.[86]

De Saint-Étienne, the SCAA representative at this meeting, responded to the president by claiming that internecine Algerian executions were on the increase nationally and Paris reflected this wider trend, but also noted an increase in attacks using explosives which suggested that right-wing or OAS commandos may have been responsible. The idea that killings may have been the work of extremist organizations, a secret 'parallel police' operating outside the control of the conventional hierarchy, was readily adopted by the Prefecture since it offered a convenient agency that kept the official security service in the clear.

However, the Prefecture was unable to stem the suspicion that was spreading even into the conservative establishment. On 15 September a high-ranking civil servant Michel Massenet, the Délégué à l'action sociale pour les Français musulmans algériens en Métropole, wrote to his superior that attempts to halt police violence had failed either 'on order of the Interior Minister himself or owing to an absence of control by this Minister over his police service'.[87] In two further notes written after the events of 17 October Massenet stated that during September several trustworthy people had informed him of police assassinations but that his attempts to inform the Interior Minister, the Prime Minister's Office, and the secrétaire général pour les affaires algériennes had met a blank wall.[88] Massenet commented on 'the very grave transgressions' committed by the police since 15 July and 'a profound weakening of discipline inside the body of the police'.[89] Warning bells were also ringing within the Parquet de la Seine and the Ministry of Justice where legal actions against the police were reported to be 'raining down'. Henri Maynier, director of the Cabinet of the Minister of Justice, expressed his alarm to the Prime Minister's office that in the case of sixty bodies found in the Paris region, 'certain indications lead us to fear that this may be a question of

[85] APP-HA47, SCINA meeting, 4 Oct. 1961.

[86] APP-HA47, R. Chaix, Director of SCAA to Papon, 5 Oct. 1961, forwarding a note received from M. de Saint-Étienne who had attended the SCINA meeting.

[87] Centre des archives contemporaines de Fontainbleau (CAC) 770391, art. 8. Massenet to secrétaire général pour les affaires algériennes, 15 Sept. 1961.

[88] CAC-770391, art. 8. M. Massenet, *Déroulement des événements du mois d'octobre 1961 tel qu'il est apparu à mon service*.

[89] CAC-770391, art. 8. M. Massenet, *Note concernant les récents événements survenus dans la région parisienne*.

"police actions" '. Maynier also noted a striking correlation between the statistical increase recorded by the morgue (IML) and the fact that 'the first attacks on police victims took place at the end of August'.[90]

In most instances in which police murdered Algerians late at night, strangling and beating the victim in isolated locations, before tipping the body, stripped of identifying papers, into rivers and canals, the chances of a later autopsy and investigation tracing the murder back to police assailants were very slim indeed. However, if we examine the sixty-seven better documented cases in the seven weeks prior to 17 October in which there is evidence of a police involvement and the identity of the victim is known, it is possible to establish the overall pattern of killings.[91] Most of the incidents involving the police are known either because the victims survived or were able to speak before dying in hospital, or because witnesses saw Algerians arrested and taken away by police shortly before their corpses were found. While these cases represent only the tip of an iceberg, they are sufficiently numerous to prove that elements within the police force were involved in a systematic campaign in which the objective was not, as so often in the past, to beat and torture but to murder the victim.

Leaving aside violence inflicted in police stations (seven individuals), the remaining sixty cases can be divided into two main categories. First, there were a large number of instances, involving some twenty-two victims, in which police officers and *harkis* were involved in shooting Algerians in the street, in cafés, or during hotel searches. During September and early October, as the police came under attack from FLN commandos, officers were increasingly nervous and some of the instances of shooting could be attributed to genuinely difficult or dangerous moments in which the police were faced with a real or potential enemy. However, this shaded over into situations in which the police were prepared to shoot at any opportunity since they knew that they would be protected by superior officers if they brought down an unarmed or innocent Algerian under the excuse of 'legitimate defence'. In a typical instance, on 5 September 1961 a Tunisian Khémis Benchaalia was going to work on his scooter when a police officer shot him from a parked car, causing serious internal injuries. 'It seemed to me', reported the officer in a statement, 'that he was holding a gun in his right hand which was aimed at us.'[92] Allaoua Belaïd was shot and killed in Saint-Denis at 12.45 a.m. on 18 September by officer 'S' who saw him 'putting his hand into his right pocket'. Belaïd was unarmed.[93] On 22 September Habouche Bellache was

[90] CARAN, BB 30 1850, notes by Henri Maynier, 27 Oct., 2 and 6 Nov., quoted in Géronimi Report, 15–17.

[91] The 67 individuals were identified through a card index cross-correlation of all cases of named persons killed by the police, found dead after arrest by the security forces or who survived assassination during the period 1 Sept. to 16 Oct. 1961. The main sources used, in addition to the numerous files in the police archives, are Einaudi, *La Bataille de Paris* and *Octobre 1961*; Brunet, *Police contre FLN*; the Mandelkern and Géronimi Reports.

[92] Archives du Parquet de la Seine, dossier no. 51813, in Einaudi, *Octobre 1961*, 79–80.

[93] Archives du Parquet de Paris, dossier no. 77031, in Einaudi, *Octobre 1961*, 91.

leaving his room at 7 rue Frattaci in Boulogne-Billancourt when police fired two fatal shots from a car parked opposite: according to the officers Bellache, who was in shirt-sleeves and unarmed, 'moved his hand towards one of his pockets'.[94] On 8 October four plain-clothes officers shot Smaïl Lasmi in his lodging house: taken to the hospital of the Hôtel Dieu with a stomach wound, he died one week later.[95]

In most of these instances the subsequent police and judicial records of inquiry reveal gross impediment to proper investigation, a mass of flawed and contradictory police evidence, and a barely concealed attempt at cover-up. Officers knew they were virtually untouchable and made this evident through provocative and cynical comment in their reports. Since Papon had issued confidential instructions on 5 September that officers should shoot first and ask questions later, and stated again on 2 October that he would cover for his men, including by planting weapons on unarmed Algerians who were killed, it does not seem surprising that dozens of innocent people were to die in this way in the weeks prior to 17 October. Moreover, the spread of such practices into the police force goes a long way to explain why officers, in so many different locations in Paris on 17 and 18 October, were prepared to fire on unarmed demonstrators.

The second category of killings, and by far the most frequent, involved some thirty-eight named individuals who were arrested by groups of officers, usually in plain-clothes, in the street or café-hotels, and taken away by car to be murdered in isolated locations. The mode of killing followed a regular pattern: in wooded areas (the Bois de Boulogne, Bois de Vincennes, isolated orchards, etc.), the victim would be savagely beaten, kicked, and then strangled with a cord. A well-documented case of this kind concerns Mohamed Badache, who was picked up by a motor-bike patrol outside his hotel in the 15th arrondissement on the night of 15 October. The two uniformed officers took him by side-car to the Forest of Meudon, where one said: 'My brother was killed in Algeria by the *fellaghas* [rebels]. The good must pay for the bad.' Badache was then strangled with a rope and managed to survive by slipping two fingers under the cord before being left for dead. His identity papers, money, and watch were stolen.

After he lodged a complaint Badache's case was investigated by Police judiciaire of the Sûreté nationale, and he picked out 'M', one of his aggressors from both photographs and an identity parade. Medical inspections by experts on 4 November and 6 December confirmed signs of neck lesions from strangulation and injuries to the face and abdomen.[96] There are numerous other well-documented cases of this kind, including Arezki Hamouda, Amar Akkache, Belaïd Iguer, Makhlouf Benkhellat (Bois de Vincennes), Abdallah Boucherit (Bois de Boulogne), Mohamed Taharbouchet, Abdallah Tikharibine, and three cases where victims were left lying unconscious across railway lines (Mohand Meziane, Cherif Ouchene, and Ben Djemoui Saadi Baker). The frequency of strangulation in many of these

[94] APP-4562, in Brunet, *Police contre FLN*, 128.

[95] Archives de l'Assistance publique, Hôtel Dieu; Archives du ministère de la Justice, in Einaudi, *Octobre 1961*, 141–2.

[96] Brunet, *Police contre FLN*, 150–4; Einaudi, *La Bataille de Paris*, 90.

instances appears to have been a deliberate ploy to camouflage killings as the work of North Africans; as a police officer wrote in a report on the body of Abdallah Boucherit, found strangled with a belt in the Bois de Boulogne on 4 October, this was probably the work of Algerians since this was 'a form of execution used by the FLN'.[97]

Similar in many ways to the above operations, but with a different destination, were many dozens of cases in which police officers knocked unconscious, shot, or tied up victims before precipitating them into water-ways (the Rivers Seine and Marne, the canals of the Ourcq, Saint-Denis, or Saint-Martin). To give just one example from many: on 11 September Mouloud Boukaiba and Mohamed Zeboudj were taken away by officers from the café-hotel where they lived at 3 rue de l'Union in Aubervilliers. Boukaiba was beaten up, shot in the thigh, and thrown unconscious into a canal near Bobigny. He regained consciousness on hitting the water, and was hospitalized after being found by a passer-by. The corpse of Zeboudj was found on wasteland behind the police station at the Porte de la Villette.[98] It was the rapid increase in corpses pulled from the Seine and canals of Paris in September and early October that caused the greatest disquiet with the authorities. The police preference for this method stemmed from the fact that investigation was made difficult, if not impossible: corpses, in most cases stripped of identification, were carried away by currents from the point of execution and were only recovered days or weeks later.[99] How and why these killing squads operated, and the extent to which they were linked to extreme right-wing or 'ultra' networks within the police force will be examined in more detail in Chapter 6.

THE FLN RESPONDS: THE PLANNING OF THE OCTOBER DEMONSTRATIONS

The French Federation of the FLN finally responded to the remorseless psychological pressure and violence of the Paris police by a series of mass demonstrations. On 7 October the Comité fédéral sent Zouaoui instructions for the organization of mass demonstrations that would take place on 1 November in Paris as part of the international movement to mark the anniversary of the outbreak of the 1954 revolution.[100] This letter crossed an urgent note sent by courier in which Zouaoui reported on Papon's severe repression, including the introduction of the curfew,

[97] Archives du Parquet de Paris, dossier no. 51381, in Einaudi, *Octobre 1961*, 128. Papon, *Les Chevaux du pouvoir*, 220, repeats the smokescreen that strangulation was a 'ritual technique of the FLN'.

[98] Einaudi, *La Bataille de Paris*, 76.

[99] Géronimi Report, *Rapport de Mission*, 19–20, notes that for the whole of 1961 some 155 cases of violent death were recorded in which the circumstances were unknown. Of these 110 were corpses pulled from waterways (of which 37 had been strangled prior to immersion), and 45 were found in the street or open spaces.

[100] *Sou'al*, 7 (Sept. 1987), 71–3, Haroun to Zouaoui, 7 Oct. 1961. For a detailed investigation of the planning of the October demonstrations see MacMaster and House, 'La Fédération de France'.

and recommended to the Comité that a mass action by men, women, and children should be taken to defy the curfew from 8.30 p.m. onwards, and that French trade unions and parties of the left be encouraged to persuade their militants to join with the Algerians.[101] The Comité acted rapidly by calling a number of leading FLN figures, including Zouaoui, Saddek, and Omar Ouhadj, leader of the major FLN workers' organization, the Amicale générale des travailleurs algériens (AGTA), across the border for direct consultation and on 10 October provided detailed instructions for a three-phase series of actions, the first of which would involve mass demonstrations in Paris, before solidarity protests in provincial towns by Algerian women and a final phase involving a twenty-four hour general strike that would coincide with a prison hunger strike.[102]

Zouaoui clearly had an enormous task on his hands to coordinate the Paris demonstrations in the time available, but on 14 October he was able to send the Federal Committee a detailed plan for a mass defiance of the curfew on the evening of Tuesday 17 October; a strike of all Algerian shops, cafés, and businesses on the 18 October; a further defiance of the curfew on the evening of 19th, and finally a demonstration of women and children outside the Prefecture of Police on 20 October. Chapter 5 will explore the motivation of the FLN leadership and the wider political context in which the demonstrations were planned, but for the militants in Paris a march through the streets and squares of the central city was to be a defiant and proud gesture against the rising wave of extremely violent repression and racist humiliation which they had endured over the previous months.

[101] *Sou'al*, 7 (Sept. 1987), 74, Zouaoui to Haroun, 7 Oct. 1961.
[102] Ibid. 75–7, Haroun to Zouaoui, 10 Oct. 1961.

4

The Demonstrations of 17 to 20 October 1961

During the mass Algerian demonstrations of October, and in the weeks following, it was an almost impossible task for any individual or organization, including FLN cadres, journalists, political activists, trade unionists, and social workers close to the action, to gain a clear picture of what had happened during the night of 17–18 October.[1] During any large street demonstration a direct participant can only witness one restricted part of a large moving column and an observer in one location might well see a violent police clash that another, a few hundred yards distant, may be oblivious to.[2] On 17 October this difficulty was compounded by the fact that the FLN organized a number of quite separate marches that converged on the city centre from many locations scattered throughout the Paris region. However, in recent years a growing body of both oral and archival evidence has become available and from this it is possible to map the events with some accuracy. The purpose of this chapter is not to quote the entirety of this considerable and still growing body of information, but through a cross-correlation of evidence to provide as clear a reconstruction as possible of the events over this four-day period.

THE FLN PLANNING OF 17 OCTOBER

The pyramidal structure of the FLN Fédération de France in the Paris region meant that Zouaoui, the head of the Paris organization, could pass the orders for the demonstration rapidly down to militants at local level. This machinery of communication was extremely well oiled since group meetings were held on a weekly basis, and the FLN, mainly for purposes of monthly collections, kept its own census and police check on the location and movement of all Algerians within each locale, street, hotel, or *bidonville*.

[1] The one exception here was the Prefecture of Police, both through its radio-linked command centre, and the urgent centralization of police reports that was ordered early in the morning of 18 Oct.

[2] René Bellanger, an officer on duty during 17 Oct. on the Champs-Élysées knew nothing of the police violence until told next day by colleagues: see *Solidaires: Journal de l'Union régionale des syndicats d'Île-de-France* (CFDT), 373 (Nov. 1994), 42.

3. Demonstrators, including women and small children, crossing the rue de Richelieu at about 9 p.m. on 17 October 1961. (Georges Azenstarck.)

The correspondence between Haroun and Zouaoui, and FLN documents captured by the police, provide clear detail of the plan. In order to prevent the police gaining prior knowledge of the demonstration and disrupting the march, militants were told to hold local group meetings only hours before the event.[3] At these meetings leaders were instructed to 'undertake a campaign with the rank-and-file to show them the importance of this riposte to defeat these racist, arbitrary, savage and barbaric measures'. Absolutely all Algerians, men women, children and elderly, were to participate in the boycott and any who failed to participate would be the 'object of very serious sanctions'.[4] Under the guidance of FLN stewards, single men and entire families were to depart in time to reach designated locations in the major boulevards and squares of the central city by 8.30 p.m., the time when the curfew came into force, and to demonstrate until 9.30 p.m. It was absolutely forbidden to carry any kind of weapon and in many instances stewards carried out body searches before people moved off under orders to demonstrate, 'peacefully, with dignity and an absolute calm'.

[3] APP-H1B21, Instructions of Zouaoui, 14 Oct. 1961, for the organization of the demonstration.
[4] APP-HA110, Text of instructions for 17–20 Oct. found on an FLN militant intercepted by the police in the early afternoon of 17 Oct.

During the late afternoon and early evening of 17 October, some 20,000 to 30,000 Algerian men, women, and children, many of them dressed proudly in their Sunday best (see Photos 3 and 5), began to move in small groups from every corner of the compass into central Paris, travelling by train, Métro, taxi, and on foot.

POLICE ORGANIZATIONAL RESPONSE

The considerable success of the secret FLN mobilization is shown by the fact that the Prefect of Police did not even realize that it was taking place until the night of 16–17 October. Police informers had picked up information on the demonstration as early as 13–15 October, but had been unable to contact their controllers in the SAT bureau at Nanterre.[5] An unexpected rail strike at the Saint-Lazare station prevented some Algerians from getting to work on the morning of 17 October and a group of these men, to Zouaoui's chagrin, began to demonstrate prematurely from about midday in the streets between Madeleine and Opéra.[6] On one of the 192 men arrested, the police found a copy of written instructions, and this provided them with the first detailed information of the plans for both the 17 October, the commercial strike on the 18th, and the women's demonstration on 20 October.[7]

Jean-Paul Brunet argues that police violence on 17 October was in part due to the element of surprise and that the total force available to Papon of 1,658 men was 'extraordinarily weak', deployed in a rush and insufficient to cope with a demonstration on this scale. Brunet claims that such an outnumbered force will invariably descend into violence as order and control break down.[8] The argument is far from convincing. First, Papon had considerable experience of planning and implementing city-wide operations to secure the capital in the face of mass demonstrations and insurrection. During the crisis of 13 May 1958 which led to the collapse of the Fourth Republic, Papon took pride in his command of operations to block Communist forces from the 'Red Suburbs' penetrating the central city by setting up police barriers on all the key entrances (*portes*) to Paris.[9] Papon had a dry-run of a similar scenario only six months before 17 October when he organized the perimeter defence of Paris when parachute regiments threatened to seize the city during the generals' putsch in Algeria.[10]

Once Papon had captured a copy of the FLN plan he knew exactly how to proceed, and at 4.20 p.m. he sent out instructions to the six divisional commanders

[5] APP-HA110, SAT 1st Secteur, *Note de renseignement*, no. 384, on intelligence from informer 'Ami' 17–18 Oct.; note no. 385 from 'Alphonse', 19 Oct.

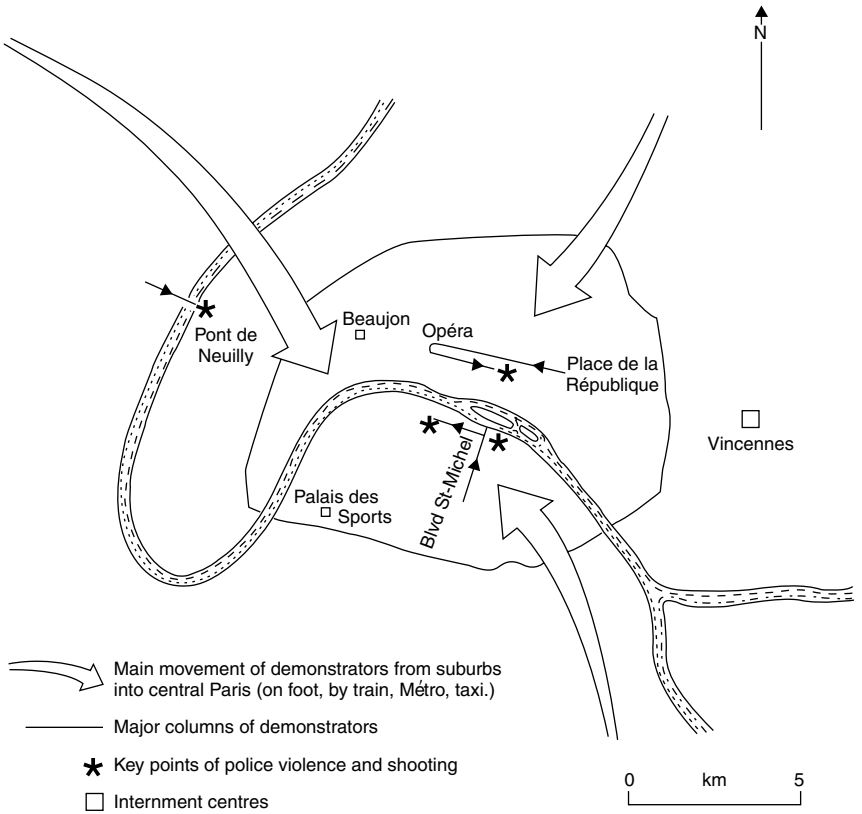
[6] *Sou'al*, 7 (Sept. 1987), 81, letter from Zouaoui to Ladlani, 17 Oct. 1961.

[7] APP-HA110, Report *Au sujet des manifestations organisées par le FLN le 17 octobre 1961*; APP-H1B34, SCAA report CH1/CJ, 17 Oct. 1961.

[8] Brunet, *Police contre FLN*, 178–81, 187.

[9] Papon, *Les Chevaux du pouvoir*, 63–5, 93.

[10] Ibid. 326.



Map 3. The demonstrations of 17 October 1961

of the municipal police, three squadrons of *gendarmes mobiles*, and two CRS companies.[11] Second, Papon knew from the captured FLN document that the demonstration was to be entirely pacific, and would include women and children, a fact that was conveyed to police commanders. The forces under Papon's command, consisting of extremely tough and experienced men, armed to the teeth with riot sticks, pistols and submachine guns were neither overstretched nor at risk of losing control of the demonstration at any moment. The arrival of separate groups of Algerians in the main-line and Métro stations spaced over a period of several hours provided a readily manageable situation for the police who dispatched demonstrators by bus to temporary holding centres. Third, far from being frightened and on edge, the predominant attitude among the police force was one of eager anticipation at the golden opportunity to wreak revenge on a detested enemy that had been assassinating colleagues but now, for the first time,

[11] APP-HA110, *Au sujet des manifestations organisées par le FLN le 17 octobre 1961*; APP-H1B26, Telegram order 17 Oct. 1961 for police deployment.

presented a visible and exposed target. The officer Raoul Letard recounts: 'and our dream, we would say to ourselves, was that one day, one day at least they are going to do the bloody stupid thing of coming out all together . . . and we would be able to pay things back'. Men who knew themselves protected by Papon after his notorious speech of 2 October, responded with alacrity to the mobilization orders: 'and so we began to help ourselves in the container of long clubs (*bidules*), each one searching for the best *bidule*, the finest skull basher'.[12] Papon has constantly portrayed the events of 17 October as a heroic defence by the police of the vulnerable seat of government, the very core of French power, as it came under attack from ruthless terrorists, 'a malevolent monster' that was bent on unleashing a 'murderous riot'.[13] But, as events were to prove, violence was a unilateral police phenomenon.

Mohamed Zouaoui, working in close liaison with the Comité fédéral in Cologne, planned the 17 October demonstration by dividing the greater Paris region into sectors from each of which militants were channelled towards separate locations within the central city area[14] (see Map 3).These zones still provide the most useful framework for understanding the complex, and often confusing, events as they unrolled on the night of 17 October, and are now looked at in turn.

SECTOR 1: THE PONT DE NEUILLY–ÉTOILE AXIS

Zouaoui planned to channel Algerians who lived in the densely populated industrial suburbs and *bidonvilles* to the west (Nanterre, Courbevoie, Colombes, Puteaux, Bezons) across the Seine to the most important of the demonstrations along the axis of the Champs Élysées between the Arc de Triomphe and the Place de la Concorde. In order to prevent police interception the Algerians were to surface at different Métro stations along the Champs Élysées.[15] However, on the 17 October, while some Algerians got through to the target zone by bus or Métro, the largest number travelled by foot and bus to a collecting point at the Rond-Point Défense from where a column of some 10,000 people would attempt to march across the Pont de Neuilly towards the Arc de Triomphe three kilometres further to the east.[16] The bridge was the single most strategic gateway into central Paris and Papon, determined to hold this at all costs, created a barrier of police which was led by the brutal district 'specials' reinforced by *harkis* under Captain Montaner, the riot squads of the 22nd compagnie d'intervention armed with deadly *bidules*, and a unit of CRS.

[12] Archives IHESI, transcript of interview with Raoul Letard, 11 May 1993, pp. 10, 12. Police trade unionists recognized that 'we have taken part in a veritable settling of scores', archives SGP-FO, Conseil syndical gardiens, 7 Nov. 1961, 22. [13] Papon, *Les Chevaux du pouvoir*, 211, 223.

[14] APP-H1B20, FLN plan of mobilization dated 17 Oct. 1961.

[15] *Sou'al*, 7(Sept.1987), 78–80, Zouaoui to Haroun, 14 Oct. 1961.

[16] Monique Hervo, who participated in the march, provides a graphic eyewitness account of the event in *Chroniques*, 198–202.

As the column of marchers reached the bridge in three successive waves between 8.30 and 9.00 p.m., it was without warning subjected to both gunfire and an extremely violent police charge. A feature of the onslaught, as elsewhere throughout the city and the holding centres between 17 and 20 October, was that police wielded riot clubs, rifle butts, and, in some instances, 'unofficial' weapons, including iron bars and pick-axe handles, with lethal intent. Blows were aimed with maximum force at the head and stomach, and as hundreds of Algerians arrived in hospital casualty wards doctors catalogued a discernible pattern of injury: open scalp wounds, cracked skulls, broken bones of the arm and hand that resulted from attempts to ward off blows, internal damage to the stomach and intestines, and broken legs. So savage was the onslaught that thirty of the fifty clubs (*bidules*) issued by police district commander Mézière were broken.[17]

Although the district commander in overall charge at Neuilly, Pierre Mézière, drew up a report in which he claimed that the police 'had to fire as a response to the numerous gun-shots fired by the demonstrators',[18] it was almost certainly the police who first opened fire and not a single officer here, as elsewhere in Paris, sustained a gunshot injury on 17 October.[19] A number of newspapers reported that a *harki* officer had fired a machine gun into the crowd, and triggered off a general fusillade that lasted for about half an hour, killing two and injuring another eight.[20] Police forces also gathered at both ends of the Pont de Neuilly and affected a pincer movement which trapped Algerians in the centre of the bridge who were then subjected to an extremely violent baton charge. The bodies of wounded or unconscious men were then thrown over the parapet into the River Seine.[21] The next day some officers were issued with replacement bullets to fill their chargers so that, in case of any investigation, 'they can give evidence that they had not fired'.[22]

How many Algerians were killed or seriously wounded by gunfire in the Neuilly sector? An investigation led by Superintendent Mézière, concluded that two Algerians had died at the Pont de Neuilly (Abdelkader Deroues and Lamara Achemoune) while another five, mainly with leg wounds, were interviewed next day in the Nanterre hospital.[23] However, many more were shot at the Pont de Neuilly, including Saïd Saïdani (who died), Slimane Tahraoui, Salem Khéiri, Moubarek

[17] APP-H1B34, Report of Pierre Mézière to Director of Municipal Police, 17 Oct. 1961.

[18] APP-HA110, Report of Mézière, 17 Oct.

[19] On police opening fire see the eyewitness account of Khaled Benaïssa in Le Cour Grandmaison, *Le 17 octobre 1961*, 41; interview (J.H.) with Khaled Benaïssa, Aubervilliers, 15 Oct. 2002.

[20] *La Croix* and *L'Express* (19 Oct. 1961). This has since been confirmed by several police officers who were present: see in particular the testimony of Michel Gribius in Einaudi, *Octobre 1961*, 179–80.

[21] I. Boussad, in a 1999 interview, told how he saw two men from his own village (C. Rabah and R. Belgacem) thrown from the Pont de Neuilly, and had later seen their corpses, see Le Cour Grandmaison, *Le 17 octobre 1961*, 32.

[22] Einaudi, *La Bataille de Paris*, 123–4, and *Octobre 1961*, 193–4; *Drowning by Bullets* (1992).

[23] APP-HA110, Report of Pierre Mézière, 17 Oct. 1961; interviews by Maurice Thomas, *commissaire adjoint*, of injured demonstrators in the Maison départementale of Nanterre, 18 and 19 Oct. 1961.

Saâdoune, Meliani Ben Fed'ha, and Mohamed Lamine.[24] Hospital registers, as will be seen later, greatly underestimated the number of injured and dead because they were carried away by fellow Algerians and, even when suffering from appalling injuries, many refused to go to hospital because of a well-founded fear of arrest. Several doctors have provided testimony of the serious injuries and gun-shot wounds which they were asked to treat in the *bidonvilles* on the night of the 17 October.[25] It seems likely some of the dead were buried clandestinely by their friends and relatives, rather than being handed over to the much feared French authorities.

Late into the night of 17 October small mobile units of police continued to kill Algerians as they were trapped alone or in small groups in isolated locations throughout the western suburbs. The photo-journalist Élie Kagan travelling by scooter found three or four bodies in the rue des Pâquerettes near the Nanterre *bidonvilles*; as he helped an injured man to hospital, a group of Algerians emerged from hiding to carry off the dead.[26] The officer Raoul Letard recounts how men of his specialized intervention unit (3rd compagnie de district) crossed the Pont de Neuilly into the suburbs of Colombes where from about 11 p.m. they engaged in a murderous two-hour search, 'and we fired on everything that moved, it was horrible . . . for two hours it was a man hunt'. A police van which followed their car was piled high with bodies and on return to their station at the Porte de la Villette the commander flew into a rage because corpses had been gathered up rather than left in the street.[27] Algerians were also thrown from many other bridges that cross the loops of the River Seine in western Paris, at the Pont-Neuf of Argenteuil, the Pont de Bezons, and the Pont d'Asnières where the officer Gérard Monate saw the drivers and passengers descend from a bus to help police throw Algerians into the river.[28] A police officer, Paul Rousseau, was witness to further killings at the Pont de Clichy: 'I even saw some police who fired into the crowd and threw people from the bridge.' He described a scene of horror in and around the bridge with pools of blood like a battlefield. 'The Police of the district companies came towards us. Some had blood on their hands. They were proud. They showed their hands and said: "You see, we got them, our wogs!" '[29]

SECTOR 2: THE BOULEVARDS SAINT-MICHEL AND SAINT-GERMAIN

All those Algerians living south of the River Seine in the Left Bank arrondissements (5th, 6th, 7th, 13th, 14th, and 15th) and in the adjacent suburbs (mainly Montrouge, Sceaux, L'Hay-les-Roses, Ivry, and Vitry) travelled in small groups to

[24] Einaudi, *La Bataille de Paris*, 133–4.

[25] *L'Humanité* (11 Nov. 1961); Einaudi, *La Bataille de Paris*, 133–4; Hervo, *Chroniques*, 203, on a first-aid post set up in the shanty town.

[26] Einaudi, *La Bataille de Paris*, 158–9.

[27] Archives IHESI, transcript of interview with Raoul Letard, 11 May 1993, pp. 13–14.

[28] Einaudi, *La Bataille de Paris*, 159; Einaudi, *Octobre 1961*, 184; Brunet, *Police contre FLN*, 215.

[29] Einaudi, *La Bataille de Paris*, 124.

the Place d'Italie and boulevard Montparnasse and then marched north along the axis of the boulevard Saint-Michel as far as Saint-Germain (see Map 3). One demonstrator was shot and seriously wounded by a police officer close to the Luxembourg Métro.[30] The journalist René Dazy witnessed the crowd, which included many women, children, and elderly, dressed in their Sunday best, approach the Pont Saint-Michel, 'They marched in good order, the leaders at the front, with an inexpressible dignity.'[31] District Commander Gaveau, in charge of this sector, admitted: 'I was struck by the impression of discipline that reigned throughout the procession', and the way FLN stewards quickly dealt with any 'acts of insubordination'.[32] The police lined up a cordon of men in front of the bridge and, at the juncture with the boulevard Saint-Germain, trapped hundreds of Algerians in a pincer movement and then attacked with great violence. Many witnesses have described the ferocious police onslaught in detail and, as plate-glass windows caved under the weight of panicked crowds, fleeing Algerians left the street covered in pools of blood and a litter of shoes, berets, and scarves.[33]

On the Pont Saint-Michel the police charged and threw Algerians into the River Seine: Daniel Mermet watched in horror as officers beat the arms and head of a man clinging to the parapet, until he dropped like a stone into the river.[34] Again many witnesses have confirmed the drownings, including the police officer Guy Gauthier, Abderrahmane Krib, Jacques Amory, Édouard Durand, Saigha El Mimoun, and Yvette Teurlai-Quéval who had the courage to dive into the Seine in the dark and was able to save two men thrown down from the Petit Pont, although others drowned.[35] Among those caught up in the violence near the bridge was 17-year-old Alain Cayrol*, son of a senior officer in the Police judiciaire, who received head wounds from a *bidule*.[36]

Many Algerians marched westwards along the boulevard Saint-Germain, or fled in a dispersed pattern down the warren of narrow streets between the boulevard Saint-Michel and the rue de Vaugirard. In this sector, within the 6th arrondissement Latin Quarter, the police fired on Algerians in at least three locations. At 10.15 p.m. in the Place Saint-Sulpice a group of police officers fired at least forty rounds from revolvers and a machine gun into a group of about 250 Algerians. Abderamane Gasmi and Nessaoud Ouchene were taken to the Cochin Hospital with gun-shot wounds. The subsequent statements made by seven officers during a police investigation followed an identical and implausible format, suggesting a concerted cover-up, including the claim that they had riposted to Algerian gunfire

[30] *Le Figaro* (18 Oct.1961). [31] *Vérité-Liberté*, 13 (Nov. 1961), 5.

[32] APP-H1B34, Report of Commissaire Gaveau, 17 Oct.1961.

[33] Ibid., René Dazy; see also the statements of other witnesses in Einaudi, *La Bataille de Paris*, 136–8, 144–5, and, *Octobre 1961*, 173–6; Brunet, *Police contre FLN*, 208–9; *Drowning by Bullets* (1992).

[34] Einaudi, *Octobre 1961*, 174; *Drowning by Bullets* (1992); FLN witness reports in APP-H1B35.

[35] Einaudi, *Octobre 1961*, 172–5; Einaudi, *La Bataille de Paris*, 147.

[36] APP-HA111, dossier of investigation ordered by Faugère, Directeur of Prefecture Cabinet, 31 Oct.1961.

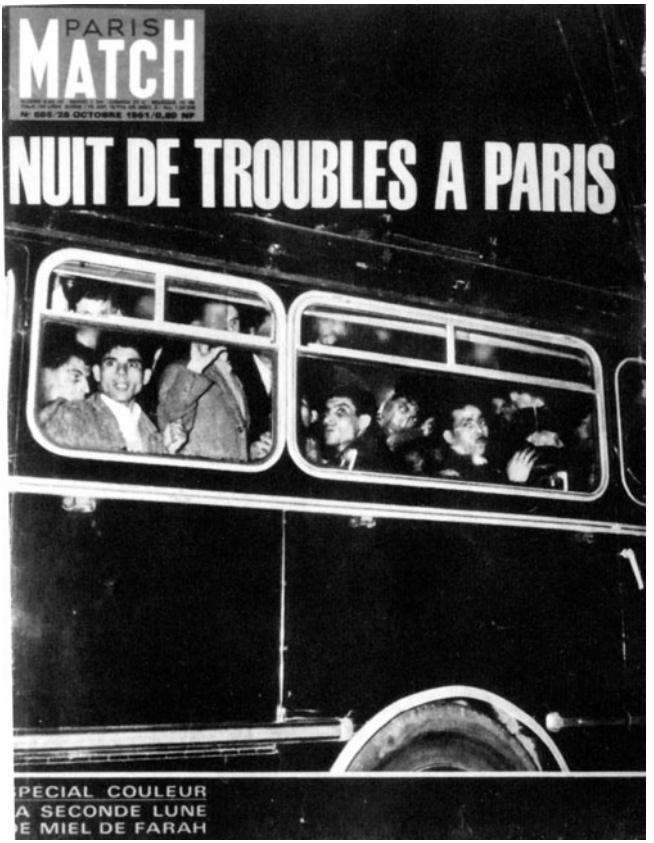
or, if not actual shots, to two men who were seen to 'turn round reaching for their pockets'.[37] In the National Assembly the respected deputy Eugène Claudius-Petit claimed that a police officer had fired a machine gun at a group of Algerians fleeing down the rue de Vaugirard and three had dropped to the ground with bullet wounds.[38] Another group of Algerians moved further westward along the boulevard Saint-Germain, where they were attacked by the police near the rue du Bac, while others were fired at and wounded in the rue de Lille. It was close to this point that Élie Kagan photographed an Algerian on the platform of the Métro Solférino with a bullet lodged in his shoulder.[39]

SECTOR 3: FROM OPÉRA TO PLACE DE LA RÉPUBLIQUE

Zouaoui planned that two separate columns would march towards each other from opposite ends of the Grands Boulevards, along the axis between the Place de l'Opéra in the west, and the Place de la République in the east (see Map 3). The Algerians who lived in the arrondissements to the east and north-east (10th, 11th, 19th, 20th) and the outlying suburbs (Bondy, Noisy, Bagnolet, Montreuil) were to congregate in the Place de la République and then march westward along the axis of the Grands Boulevards to the Place de l'Opéra. Algerians living in the arrondissements to the north and north-west (1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 8th, 9th, 17th, 18th) and the outlying suburbs (Saint-Denis, Aubervilliers, Le Bourget) were to move into central Paris via the Gare Saint-Lazaire or surface in adjacent Métro stations (Opéra, Chaussée-d'Antin, Havre-Caumartin) before moving eastwards from the Place de l'Opéra towards République.[40]

At the Opéra, as for the other key Métro stations at which demonstrators were expected, Papon placed large police forces who intercepted the Algerians as they began to exit at regular intervals from about 6 p.m. onwards. As demonstrators surfaced into the wet night, they were rounded up, frequently with considerable violence, and lined up with their hands on head to await transport to various holding centres by buses requisitioned from the public transport company, the Régie autonome des transports parisiens (RATP) (see Photo 4). French observers witnessed violent police assaults outside many Métro stations: at the Étoile, for example, Josette Brançon saw police systematically hitting Algerians in the head with rifle and pistol butts and when a French doctor tried to tend to a wounded man he was knocked unconscious by a blow to the face.[41] Close by, in the avenue

[37] APP-HA110, dossier *Incidents Place Saint-Sulpice, 17 octobre*.
[38] *JODP* (AN), 30 Oct. 1961, 3604.
[39] See the evidence of Marie-Lucie Lanfranchini, Pierre Berger, and Élie Kagan in Einaudi, *La Bataille de Paris*, 128, 139–40, 151–2.
[40] H1B20, FLN plan of mobilization dated 17 Oct.1961.
[41] Einaudi, *La Bataille de Paris*, 134–5; *Drowning by Bullets* (1992).



4. This Paris-Match cover photograph for 28 October of demonstrators being taken away in a RATP bus to a holding centre, is indicative of the wide publicity given by the Paris press to the events of 17–20 October in the following weeks. (*Paris-Match*.)

de la Grande Armée, police fired on Algerians who had managed to cross the Pont de Neuilly.[42] However, much of the worst violence took place underground, hidden from the public and the press (see Photo 5). Because of the huge numbers of demonstrators that got off every arriving train, police herded the men into the communication passages of the Métro system, especially at Concorde and Madeleine, where they were held standing for up to three or four hours in hot and airless conditions and subjected to endless beatings and insults.[43]

The mass arrests at the Opéra Métro and neighbouring stations prevented any demonstration proceeding eastwards, but Algerians from the east and north-eastern sectors of Paris did succeed in forming a large column of men and women that marched in good order from the Place de la République through to

[42] Einaudi, *Octobre 1961*, 183.

[43] On the violence inside the Métro system see *Différences*, 190 (Nov. 1997), 3; Einaudi, *La Bataille de Paris*, 128–9, 167; Einaudi, *Octobre 1961*, 196; Brunet, *Police contre FLN*, 197–9.

5. In the Métro station Solférino a young socialist of the PSU helps a wounded demonstrator, dressed in his Sunday best, get away by buying him a train ticket, one of the rare gestures of support seen by Élie Kagan on 17 October. (Élie Kagan, by permission *Bibliothèque de documentation internationale contemporaine.*)

6. Relaxed and cheering demonstrators on 17 October, prior to the police attack. (Georges Azenstarck.)

the Place de l'Opéra.[44] Here the column was halted by a line of CRS at about 9 p.m. and, after a ten minute stand-off, the FLN stewards negotiated that the march should return the way it had come and disperse at République. As the column moved back eastwards (see Photos 3 and 6) the two CRS companies placed at Opéra drove past in their buses and cars in order to intercept the march and to violently disperse it near the Bonne-Nouvelle Métro, immediately in front of the Rex Cinèma and the offices of the Communist newspaper *L'Humanité*. CRS 31, drafted in from Rouen, baton charged one section of the column towards République and fired on the crowds in front of the Saint-Martin Theatre. The other unit, CRS 21 from St-Quentin, engaged in one of the most bloody attacks of the day by driving another section of the march back towards Opéra.[45]

Almost simultaneously with the CRS onslaught to bisect and disperse the marchers, the police opened fire. According to newspaper reports, the driver of a police bus taking Algerians towards Opéra, apparently frightened by the advancing column, climbed down from his cab and threatened to fire unless it halted. At the sound of gunfire other officers then ran forward and opened a salvo of some twenty shots.[46] The militant Brahim Tabaji* recounts how, 'I found myself face-to-face with the well-armed enemy . . . In the fight a brother close to me was killed, another wounded in the stomach and me in the left shoulder by a bullet from a submachine-gun.'[47] The violence of the police assault was confirmed by the death of Guy Chevalier, who was bludgeoned as he was trying to enter the Rex Cinèma. On arrival by ambulance at the Cochin Hospital he was certified dead from 'a trauma of the neck and vertebra', although Papon, with a typical mix of cynicism and deceit, later wrote of 'a European civilian whose heart—it would appear—gave way under the shock'.[48]

The photo-journalist Georges Azenstarck, along with Serge Gautier, watched from the third floor balcony of *L'Humanité* for over an hour as police struck at Algerians with great violence. Azenstarck was able to take several photographs of some ten to twelve bodies that the police dragged and stacked in a pile on the pavement opposite, and which lay unmoved for over an hour (see Photo 7).[49] Several other witnesses saw pools of blood on the pavement and had little doubt that beneath covers laid over a seven metres long pile lay about a dozen corpses.[50] How many, apart from Chevalier, may have died or been seriously wounded near Bonne-Nouvelle is unclear. Although three Algerians from

[44] See the photographs in Anne Tristan, *Le Silence*, 46–61.

[45] On the intervention of the two CRS units see APP-H1B34, Report of Commissaire (Superintendent) Le Menn, 17 Oct. 1961.

[46] *France-Soir* (18 Oct.); *L'Express* (19 Oct. 1961), eyewitness account of Jacques Derogy.

[47] APP-H1B2, internal FLN report of Brahim Tabaji* (n.d).

[48] APP-HA110, Directeur de la Police judiciaire to Papon, 18 Oct. 1961; Papon, *Les Chevaux du pouvoir*, 213.

[49] Georges Azenstarck interview (N.M.), Paris, 17 Oct. 2005; Einaudi, *Octobre 1961*, 187–8. For other eyewitness accounts see Le Cour Grandmaison, *Le 17 octobre 1961*, 33–4; Levine, *Les Ratonnades d'octobre*, 120–35.

[50] Einaudi, *Octobre 1961*, 189–90.

7. Photograph of the Rex Cinèma taken in secret by Georges Azenstarck from the balcony of *L'Humanité* newspaper at about 11 p.m. on 17 October. Wounded demonstrators (including a pile of bodies to the left) are penned in by riot police. (Georges Azenstarck.)

this sector were admitted to the Tenon Hospital with gun-shot wounds, what happened to the bodies stacked near the Rex Cinèma and eventually removed by the police is unknown.[51]

EVENTS OF 18 OCTOBER: THE COMMERCIAL STRIKE AND DEMONSTRATIONS

The plan of the FLN Federation for Wednesday 18 October was that all Algerians who owned businesses, from shops to cafés, should go on a twenty-four hour strike, while in the evening all workers were again to defy the curfew by demonstrating. According to police reports an estimated 833 businesses out of 1,407 (59 per cent) were closed by 12.30 p.m. The Prefecture of Police, undoubtedly influenced by the famous Battle of Algiers when parachute regiments broke a strike by forcing men to return to work and by tearing shutters off locked shops with half-tracks, issued an order at 2 p.m. for the municipal police and *harkis* to force businesses to

[51] Ibid. 189; *L'Express* (19 Oct. 1961); *France-Soir* (18 Oct. 1961).

open. Montaner led operations to arrest café owners in the 13th, 18th, and 19th arrondissements and by 6.30 p.m. the police claimed victory with a massive reopening and a fall to 4–5 per cent of closures.[52]

By the 18 October Papon had deployed a huge security force to throw a defensive perimeter around the central city, blocking access of Algerian demonstrators from the suburbs. Internal FLN reports noted that the massive repression and the huge number of arrests the previous night, combined with the fatigue and fear of those who had escaped, meant that only small numbers of militants were able or prepared to demonstrate in the city. During the course of the day and evening small and vulnerable groups of Algerians were easily intercepted and arrested, mainly at railway and Métro stations (Austerlitz, Saint-Lazare, Saint-Michel, Étoile).[53]

However, out in the militant FLN bastions of the western suburbs there was significant activity during the evening and two major demonstrations were formed. A column of about 1,200 to 1,500 crossed from the Seine-et-Oise by the Pont d'Argenteuil and the Pont de Bezons, while another mass of 2,000 to 3,000 streamed out of the core of the *bidonvilles* at La Garenne-Colombes. Some 300 men from the latter group tried to cross the Pont de Neuilly towards 9.30 p.m., and were easily turned back by a barrier from which the police opened fire, wounding Rabah Sedira.[54] The police managed to break up another column of some 1,500 men and one part of this, a body of about 300 to 400, was marching close to the station of Nanterre chanting, 'Down with the curfew', 'Algeria for the Algerians', and 'Free Ben Bella', when the police operated a pincer-movement during which two men died, Achour Belkacemi from gunfire, and Abdelkader Bennehar from a massive skull injury.[55] Several other demonstrators were severely injured and at least one of these, Ahmed Abaidia, was hospitalized with shot wounds.[56]

Throughout the industrial suburbs late into the night of 18 October, as on the previous evening, mobile police units engaged in further *ratonnades*, the pursuit and killing of individuals or small and isolated groups. At Argenteuil police were reported to have fired at a group of Algerians waiting at a bus stop in the Place du 11-Novembre, killing one, while at about 10.30 p.m. four Algerians on leaving the North African hostel at Argenteuil were forced at gun-point into two waiting Peugeot 403s and then beaten and thrown into the Seine from the Pont Neuf. One of them survived, but it seems likely that two of the others corresponded to two corpses that were pulled from the Seine on 22 or 23 October at Argenteuil.[57] In the *bidonville* of La Folie Ahmed Medaoui was shot in the arm and leg by *harkis* at about 6.45 p.m., while late in the night Monique Hervo witnessed two

[52] APP-HA110, SCAA report 18 Oct. 1961; APP-HA111 and APP-HB26, Report and statistics of closure of Algerian businesses, 18 Oct.

[53] *Le Figaro* (19 Oct.1961).

[54] APP-HA110, SCAA report dated 18 Oct. 1961.

[55] *Libération, L'Humanité, and Le Figaro* (19 Oct.); *Le Monde* (20 Oct.1961). See also Brunet, *Police contre* FLN, 256–60; Einaudi, *Octobre 1961*, 215–19.

[56] Einaudi, *Octobre* 1961, 215.

[57] *L'Humanité* (27 Oct. 1961); Brunet, *Police contre FLN*, 263–4.

police officers enter the shop of Mohamed Delouche and heard gunfire. A police investigation covered up this case by claiming Delouche had been executed by FLN gun-men for refusing to join the strike.[58]

THE WOMEN'S DEMONSTRATION OF 20 OCTOBER

On the 19 October, although in principle the Federation plan for a systematic defiance of the curfew was to continue, in practice massive arrests and police repression had virtually halted any further demonstrations by Algerian men. Compared to the detention of 11,518 men on 17 October and 1,856 on 18 October, only 420 Algerians were arrested on the 19th, and protest by males had virtually run its course.[59] The Prefecture set about re-establishing its authority after the shock of the 17 October by deploying large police forces into the major Algerian neighbourhoods and shanty towns.[60] On the night of 19 October *harki* units invested the key *bidonvilles*, where they found a frightened population of mainly women and children, since some 50 to 60 per cent of husbands were still detained.[61] The social worker Brigitte Gall, in her diary for 19 October, described the terrible anxiety among the Algerian women of the *bidonvilles* since they were without any information on the fate of husbands and relatives, while many rapidly ran out of means to feed or support their numerous children.[62]

Under these conditions, and having seen the terrible injuries inflicted on the men who limped home to the *bidonvilles*, it was with extraordinary determination and courage that many hundreds of women mobilized on 20 October to realize the fourth and last day of the Federation plan.[63] From 10 a.m. onwards small groups of women and children began to arrive by bus, train, taxi, and Métro at several locations, Place de la République, Place d'Italie, Châtelet, the Prefecture of Police, and the Hôtel de Ville, where they unfurled banners and shouted the slogans, 'Total Independence for Algeria', 'Free our husbands', and 'Down with the curfew'.

The police were under instructions to avoid physical violence, any intervention 'must be particularly moderate', and plans were made to take the women by bus to a number of temporary detention centres in social welfare buildings and hospitals.[64] (see Photo 8). The Prefecture, concerned to counter the rising media complaints of violence on 17 October, ensured that journalists would be provided

[58] Hervo, *Chroniques*, 206; Einaudi, *Octobre* 1961, 213–14.

[59] Official police estimates of detentions in APP-HA110, dossier Comptes-rendus, 17–19 oct.

[60] *Le Figaro* (20 Oct.).

[61] APP-H1B13, Montaner report on FPA action at La Garenne on 19 Oct.

[62] Levine, *Les Ratonnades d'octobre*, 187–9, 'Journal de Denise.T' (Brigitte Gall). See also Hervo, *Chroniques*, 203–7, on conditions in the shanty towns.

[63] APP-HA110, SCAA report, 20 Oct., estimated that 979 women and 595 children were intercepted and detained on 20 Oct.; numerous accounts by women participants, later seized by the police, are in APP-H1B35; see also the eyewitness accounts in Levine, *Les Ratonnades d'octobre*, 202–24.

[64] APP-HA110, SCAA report, 20 Oct. 1961.

8. Women demonstrators with their children on 20 October, descending from a bus after their arrest by the police. (Archives Paris-Presse l'Intransigeant.)

with the opportunity to take photographs of kindly policemen, for example, treating women and children with food and drink in a social centre in the rue Fessart.[65] But in reality the police still subjected many women to verbal abuse, rough treatment, and assault, and one militant reported that among her group three women had been wounded (two of them hospitalized), while another had a miscarriage in the street.[66] Raoul Letard noted that some of his colleagues took scissors with them on the 20 October, 'to cut their plaits, that was to some extent our form of revenge'.[67]

[65] See the photographs taken at the rue Fessart, *France-Soir* and *Paris Presse* (23 Oct. 1961).
[66] APP-H1B21, report of cadre, 2131 (n.d.).
[67] Archives IHESI, interview with Raoul Letard, 11 May 1993, pp. 14–15.

Although Papon, through a press statement, claimed that women had demonstrated unwillingly and under duress from FLN militants, the numerous accounts by women show evidence of a spirited and highly vocal protest and the police clearly had their work cut out to control the turbulent sisters. One police report noted with prudery, 'Some women insulted the police with that filthy coarseness of which only they know the secret once they are in full spate', and some replied to threats to deport them to Algeria, 'that's all we ask for, it's unbearable here and it will save us the cost of the journey'.[68] The largest number of women were taken by bus to the psychiatric hospital of Sainte-Anne, where they continued to protest with piercing ululations. The staff prepared food for the children which, reported one woman later, 'our sisters refused to take, saying that they had not left their homes for milk and cake, but to demand the liberation of their husbands and independence for Algeria'.[69] The medical staff, shocked by the transformation of their hospital into a prison, eventually forced the police to leave, prevented any more buses coming through the gates, and encouraged most of the Algerian women to escape through a side-door.[70] This was not the only French form of protest that day: at the Gare Saint-Lazare a railway worker Yves Le Guean who protested at the arrest of Algerian women was in turn arrested and some 150 to 200 SNCF workers threatened to strike unless he was released.[71]

POLICE REPRESSION IN THE DETENTION CENTRES

Police violence after 17 October was not restricted to brutal attack on columns or groups of protesters, but continued unabated for about a week during the transport and detention of Algerians. The strategy of Papon throughout the events was not to disperse the demonstrations, but rather to seize the opportunity to arrest and identify the maximum number through a total round-up of all adult males.[72] During the period 17–19 October the police interned 14,094 men, and this huge operation involved the requisitioning of RATP buses and the Palais des Sports, the Stade de Coubertin, and the Beaujon stadium on the afternoon of 17 October. During the night of 17 October over 3,000 demonstrators were also held in numerous police stations, including the courtyards of the Prefecture of Police, before they were transferred to the major holding centres, the CIV, the Palais des Sports, and Coubertin.

[68] APP-HA110, Report from Captain Montagné, SAT Secteur 1 to SCAA, 20 Oct. 1961.

[69] APP-H1B35, *Rapport sur la riposte du 17 au 20 octobre au couvre-feu raciste;* unsigned *Rapport de manifestation féminins du 20.10.61* [*sic*] by a woman militant, coded no. 221243.

[70] Report of a doctor at Sainte-Anne, published in *Vérité-Liberté*, 13 (Nov. 1961), 4.

[71] APP-HB26, report on the women's demonstration of 20 Oct.

[72] Papon had organized a similar operation following the opening of a 'second front' by the FLN on 25 Aug. 1958, during which several thousand Algerians were interned in requisitioned stadia: Amiri, *La Bataille*, 74–81.

Once demonstrators, many of them suffering from serious injuries, had been herded into police vans or RATP buses, the accompanying officers, in what many Algerians described as a state of frenzy, continued to punch, kick, and bludgeon with pieces of wood, pick-axe handles, and cudgels. Idir Belkacem has described how one man had his head caved in with a wooden club so that blood spurted across the roof of the bus.[73] The trade union branch for RATP workers later complained about buses that returned to the garage 'literally swimming in blood'.[74] Demonstrators were also crushed bleeding and unconscious into vehicles and in one instance police reports noted that a 19 year old had been found dead on arrival at the CIV, 'suffocated in the bottom of a van coming from the 5th District'.[75]

As the buses and vans unloaded the Algerians they were forced to run the gauntlet of so-called 'reception committees', a double line of police officers armed with every conceivable weapon who tripped them up, showering down blows and kicks, just as they had done in colonial Morocco (Chapter 1). This particular procedure was virtually institutionalized and there are detailed eyewitness accounts of such gauntlets operating at the Palais des Sports, Coubertin, the CIV, the Prefecture of Police, and several police stations, particularly at Opéra, Porte de la Villette, and Grandes-Carrières. Guy Hébert, a military conscript, witnessed the 'standard' procedure at the Parc des Expositions as a police bus arrived: under the blinding lights,

> Twenty to thirty policemen formed two lateral barriers behind the vehicle . . . The Algerians had fifteen to twenty metres to cross over, hands on their heads under a hail of blows from truncheons, bludgeons, gun butts. Those who fell exhausted on the concrete were rewarded with kicks in the stomach, the groin, and the face. The Algerians began to run to escape the blows but were tripped up. Others that crashed onto the concrete stayed down and were casually pushed to the side.[76]

Conditions inside the Palais des Sports, which by the early hours of 18 October held some 6,600 men, many hundreds of them suffering from severe head wounds, broken bones, and abdominal injuries, were like a nightmare. While journalists and other observers were excluded, there exists a mass of detailed information on the situation within the Palais, as well as in the adjacent Parc des Expositions to which the detainees were transferred on 19–20 October to make way for a concert by the American jazz singer, Ray Charles (see Photo 9).[77] This includes not only FLN reports, but also accounts by police officers, most notably Joseph Gommenginger of the SGP, and by a number of young army conscripts who were posted as medical orderlies or aids (Gérard Grange,

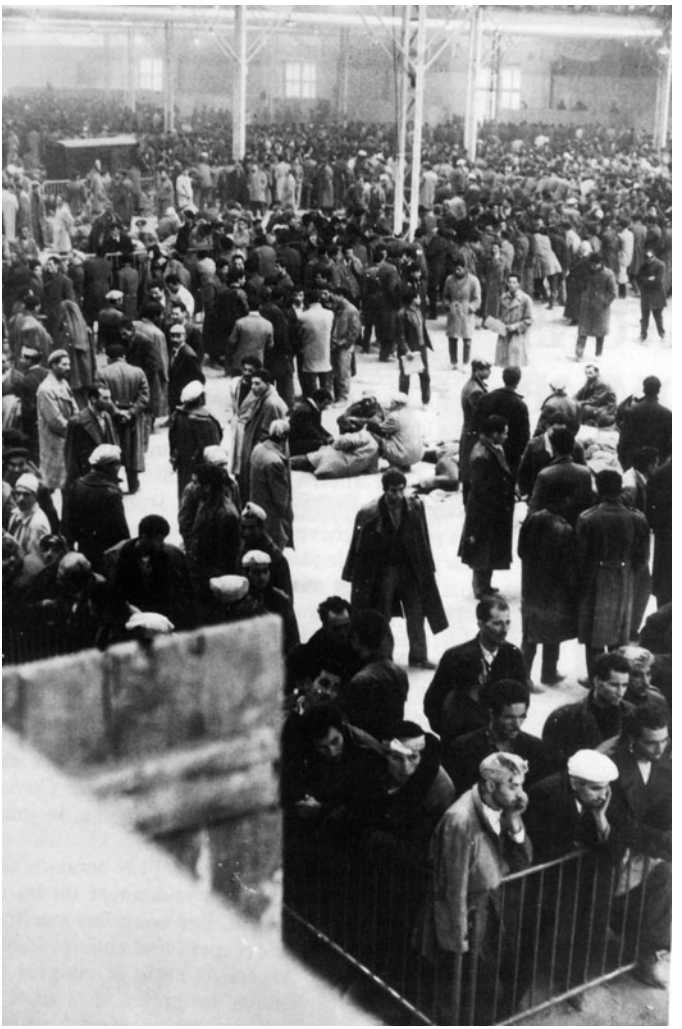
[73] *Drowning by Bullets* (1992).

[74] APP-HA110, file *Réquisition des moyens de transport de la RATP*. The Directeur général of the RATP blocked an inquiry as 'inopportune under the present circumstances'.

[75] Brunet, *Police contre FLN*, 271.

[76] *Vérité-Liberté*, 13 (Nov. 1961), 6. For evidence of 'reception committees' at other locations see Einaudi, *La Bataille de Paris*, 160–4, 199; Einaudi, *Octobre* 1961, 169–71; Le Cour Grandmaison (ed.), *Le 17 octobre*, 34.

[77] APP-H1B36 has several official police photographs, dated 18 Oct., taken inside the fixed-seat arena of the Palais des Sports.



9. Demonstrators in the temporary detention centre of the Parc des Expositions, Porte de Versailles. (Photographer unknown.)

Michel Serex, Jacques Simmonet, Isidore Lifschitz, Guy Hébert, Fernand Chaveroche). Gommenginger, witness to unrestrained police violence, tried to intercede with the Chief Superintendent (*contrôleur général*) Paris: 'But stop all this! Do something! Stop this slaughter!', but Paris said nothing and turned away.[78] While some of the most critically wounded were ferried to local hospitals

[78] Einaudi, *La Bataille de Paris*, 176–7. See also Gommenginger's comments at a police trade union meeting, 'I myself was present during this uncontrolled behaviour at the Porte de Versailles and I can assure you that when one sees people hounding wounded men who are unconscious, with broken limbs, one feels ashamed to be a human': Archives SGP-FO, Conseil syndical gardiens, 7 Nov. 1961, 24.

by ambulance or car, the small team of army doctors and nurses was inundated by the volume of injured and lacked even the most basic equipment and medicines to deal with skull and bone fractures, internal injuries, bullet wounds, imploded eye sockets, and festering gashes. The police refusal to allow victims to be treated, combined with the lack of equipment to diagnose injuries and the failure of many traumatized Algerians to seek aid since they feared that they would be deliberately harmed or even poisoned, meant that some dozen were to die from negligence.[79]

Within the Palais des Sports, which Papon visited on 19 October, police continued for several days to inflict savage beatings. Both Algerian and French witnesses concur that a standard procedure was for detainees to be assaulted or even shot when they were escorted to the toilet. As the prisoners stood at urinals and took their hands from on top of their head to arrange their flies, the guards would smash them with rifle butts.[80] Guy Hébert overheard a police officer boasting: 'He didn't want to come out of the toilet, so I fired through the door'.[81] That Algerians died from beatings and gunshot wounds within the stadia seems certain. Gérard Grange and two conscripts, all three trainee priests, were approached by an army officer: 'It's horrible! Come with me!' They were taken to a storage room for dustbins where nine bodies were piled up, arms and legs in the air, heads twisted, blood, urine: Grange was in no doubt that these men were dead.[82] Later that night Grange was ordered to accompany detainees to mobile toilets where a *gendarme mobile* fired his machine gun at an Algerian as he urinated.

Similar incidents occurred in the Coubertin Stadium. On the night of 20 October Amar Mallek asked to go to the toilet where he was killed by police officers who, in the subsequent inquiry, claimed that he had at first tried to escape and then made a grab for their weapons, so 'forcing the police to fire to break free'.[83] In this instance the victim's family wrote to the Public Prosecutor and lodged formal proceedings against the police for voluntary homicide after they received evidence from other witnesses that he had been beaten to death, information that correlated with his injuries. His brother, Saïd Mallek, after being stopped from seeing the corpse, eventually did gain access and made a visual inspection: 'My brother's body was blue, completely covered in bruises, and blood from his nose and mouth had coagulated. His head was split open, two bullets in his side, a dressing on his sexual organs and ligature marks on his

[79] Evidence of Guy Hébert in *Vérité-Liberté*, 13 (Nov. 1961), 6. See also the horrific conditions at Coubertin described by a military doctor in Einaudi, *La Bataille de Paris*, 200–3, and by the military nurse Fernand Chaveroche in Einaudi, *Octobre* 1961, 203–4.

[80] Einaudi, *Octobre* 1961, 199. [81] *Vérité-Liberté*, 13 (Nov. 1961), 6.

[82] Einaudi, *Octobre 1961*, 222: interview with Gérard Grange, 10 Nov. 1991, also *Drowning by Bullets* (1992). Brunet, *Police contre FLN*, 228, casts doubt on such evidence: how could Grange really know if these were inanimate bodies rather than corpses?

[83] APP-HA110, report of George Salvary, Chief Superintendent (*commissaire principal*), 20 Oct. 1961.

ankles and wrists'.[84] The Mallek family was able to hire Professor H.-P. Klotz and Dr Bernard Morin to carry out a fuller inspection of the body at the morgue (IML) which showed that the police account was false: Amar Mallek had not been shot, but died from traumatic blows to the head and body, with a gaping hole in the abdomen and internal injuries to the spleen and other organs. However, two days after the formal opening of a judicial investigation, the case was transferred to a military tribunal on the grounds that the accused were technically soldiers (*gendarmes mobiles*), a ploy which blocked any action by the Mallek family through the civil courts.[85] In another incident, a militant made a defiant speech in reply to loudspeaker propaganda which claimed that Algerians had demonstrated only because forced to do so by the FLN: he was shot and died on the spot. After the detainees had observed a minute's silence, the arena erupted into shouts of 'Algerian Independence!', 'Free Ben Bella!', and 'Long live the GPRA'.[86]

Similar scenes of extreme brutality were reported for other holding centres, in particular at the various police stations which were utilized on the night of 17–18 October. At a SGP union meeting on 7 November one officer expressed his shock at the acts he had witnessed: 'I saw abominable scenes, colleagues who fell with all their weight onto a North African lying on the ground in a coma . . . Once order was restored, why beat them to death with kicks and punches in the police-stations, why massacre them?'[87] At Asnières some hundred men were held in overheated police cells, while another 160 were crushed into the underground garages of the Centre administratif et social and forced to stand all night. There were reports of beatings and one death by suffocation.[88] At the Villette police station, after the usual 'reception committee', Algerians, many of them seriously wounded, were forced to stand for hours with their hands high up against the walls, to shout 'Vive de Gaulle!', and were hosed down with cold water.[89]

However, the most controversial and unresolved issue surrounds the events within the Prefecture of Police in which some 1,200 men were held in the Courtyard of 19-August. On 17 October the editors of *France-Observateur* Gilles Martinet and Claude Bourdet were working late on the journal when three or four uniformed police officers arrived in a state of shock and told how fifty Algerians had been killed in the Prefecture and thrown into the Seine.[90] Jean-Luc Einaudi and Emile Portzer, a retired officer, have argued that forty to fifty bodies

[84] *Libération* (11 Nov. 1961).

[85] APP-HA110, dossier Affair Mallek; Einaudi, *La Bataille de Paris*, 220–4; Einaudi, *Octobre 1961*, 238, interview with Odette Mallek, 7 Feb. 1999.

[86] APP-HIB35, internal FLN report from *wilaya* 1, *Rapport concernant la riposte contre le couvre-feu raciste*.

[87] Archives SGP-FO, Conseil syndical gardiens, 7 Nov. 1961.

[88] APP-HA110, report of chief superintendent (*commissaire divisionnaire*) into events at Asnières; Einaudi, *La Bataille de Paris*, 142–3.

[89] Einaudi, *Octobre 1961*, 171–2.

[90] Einaudi, *La Bataille de Paris*, 166, interviews with Claude Bourdet and Gilles Martinet; Bourdet in *Drowning by Bullets* (1992).

may well have been thrown either into the Seine, located only yards away, or into the Canal Saint-Martin, a version that has been rejected by Jean-Paul Brunet.[91] Whatever the truth behind this, there is strong evidence to show that, on arrival at the Prefecture, hundreds of Algerians were met by a violent 'reception committee', brutally beaten, and subjected to attempts to strangle or garotte them in the Courtyard of 19-August.[92] According to an officer present within the Prefecture some over-excited police wished to get back at Papon for the danger to which they had been exposed during the war and unlocked the doors leading to his private apartment so that the Prefect was led to believe that he was in immediate danger from an Algerian revolt. Papon called for reinforcements and 'an odious bludgeoning' then took place.[93] Ahmed Beyagoub, who lost both an eye and a testicle from savage blows to the head and stomach, was lying wounded on the ground when he saw Papon issue orders: 'Liquidate this vermin for me, these dirty rats! Get to work! Do your business!'[94]

Evidence of the enormous scale of police violence can be found in hospital registers that list hundreds of Algerians admitted for treatment of broken limbs, fractured skulls, internal injuries, and gun-shot wounds. An official secret investigation by Roger Wuillaume found 'only' 337 wounded Algerians had been treated, of which 232 had to be hospitalized (see Chapter 5).[95] Brunet, using the registers of only five hospitals, found that 260 were hospitalized, indicating that Wuillaume's figure was an underestimate.[96] At a protest meeting of doctors in the Mutualité on 7 November it was reported that figures from seven hospitals indicated that 448 Algerians had been treated (Boucicaut 250; Corentin-Celton 103, Broussais 30, Hôtel-Dieu 29, Saint-Louis 19, Nanterre 14, Laennec 3).[97] This list excluded the Cochin (33) and the Vaugirard (25), and at least another eight hospitals received some wounded: Saltpetrière, Kremlin-Bicêtre (one dead, internal injuries), Saint-Antoine (one body from the Seine), Tenon (three men with bullet wounds), La Pitié (one bullet wound), Necker (14-year-old girl with bullet wound), Versailles (one bullet wound), Longjumeau (one bullet wound). This gives a total of at least 515 injured arriving in seventeen hospitals, but if a full investigation of all registers in the Paris region was carried out, the figure would clearly be much higher, leaving aside the many hundreds who avoided the hospitals altogether. The FLN, which carried out its own internal inquiry into the violence, recorded some 2,300 wounded, a figure that may well be closest to

[91] Einaudi, *La Bataille de Paris*, 230; Emile Portzer made this claim in an anonymous tract 'Un groupe de policiers républicains déclare', 31 Oct. 1961, 2, and repeated them as a defence witness during Papon's libel action against Einaudi, see *L'Humanité* (12 Feb. 1999), *Le Monde* (13 Feb. 1999); for the counter-argument, Brunet, *Police contre FLN*, 229–30.

[92] See the evidence of Idir Belkacem in Einaudi, *La Bataille de Paris*, 161–2, and in *Drowning by Bullets* (1992); and of Cherhabil Hachemi in Einaudi, Octobre 1961, 173, and in *Drowning by Bullets* (1992).

[93] Einaudi, *La Bataille de Paris*, 239.

[94] Einaudi, *Octobre 1961*, 202.

[95] APP-HA111, report of Wuillaume to Interior Minister, 4 Dec. 1961, p. 6.

[96] Brunet, *Police Contre FLN*, 242–6.

[97] *Libération* (7 Nov. 1961); *L'Humanité* (7 Nov. 1961).

the reality.[98] By contrast only thirteen policemen received treatment for injury, most of them minor.

In conclusion to this chapter, it can be noted that, although most of the debate on the events of 17–20 October has centred on police violence and repression at the scene of the demonstrations and within detention centres, what appears to have been relatively neglected is the extent to which killings by 'parallel' police forces also accelerated at this time. Indeed, it may be the case that more Algerians died as victims of murder squads operating in isolated locations, by the banks of rivers and canals and in suburban woods, than were killed on the demonstrations. Claude Huet, a social worker in the *bidonvilles* in 1961, has commented: 'among those who were recovered from the Seine were blokes who had been arrested elsewhere than on the demonstrations because the police knew they were FLN. The police took advantage of the opportunity to liquidate them.'[99] This information is too extensive to review here in detail, but a few quite typical cases can be noted.

On the night of the 17 October:

- Mohamed Bourenane, arrested during the demonstration, was taken by police in a Peugeot 403 to the banks of the Seine, stabbed in the neck and thrown into the river.[100]
- Mohamed Khebach was arrested at Saint-Michel at 11.30 p.m. with three other Algerians and taken to the bridge of Alfortville and thrown into the Seine. He was the only survivor.[101]
- Aouam Messaoud was arrested and taken to the Seine near Argenteuil with another Algerian. A second group of police was already waiting on the bank. Messaoud was knocked out and thrown into the Seine with both hands and feet tied.[102]
- Allaoua Boussaha was arrested in the rue de Richelieu with his friend Saïd, and taken with other Algerians to the Seine where they were led from the police bus in groups of three and beaten by twelve uniformed officers. Suffering from a fractured leg and smashed teeth, he was thrown into the river, but survived and received hospital treatment for three months. He never saw Saïd or any of the other Algerians again.[103]

On the 18 October:

- Larbi Naït was arrested in a café with his cousin. Four officers in the car threatened to drown, shoot, or strangle him, but he was eventually beaten unconscious in a wood in Argenteuil. Found next day, he was hospitalized at Cochin still in a coma.[104]

[98] Ali Haroun, 'Le 17 Octobre à Paris', in *17 Octobre 1961: Mémoire d'une communauté*, Études et Documents (Paris: Actualité de l'Émigration, 1986), 17.
[99] Levine, *Les Ratonnades d'octobre*, 106. [100] Einaudi, *La Bataille de Paris*, 173.
[101] Ibid. [102] Ibid. 174–5. [103] Einaudi, *Octobre 1961*, 185–6.
[104] Ibid. 209–10.

- Ahmed Talbi was arrested at a bus stop in Clichy, along with Abderrazak Zaboub, by five officers, savagely beaten and thrown into the Seine. The same night he was hospitalized at Puteaux until 23 November with eight broken teeth, a broken rib and finger, head injuries, and knife wounds to the back. The body of Zaboub was found in the Seine on 20 October, an autopsy showing knife wounds and a bullet in the head.[105]

In the following days there were numerous similar instances of this kind. In all the cases cited above, evidence stemmed from the fact that at least one Algerian had survived a murderous attack, often against the odds and through an ability, although wounded, to reach the banks of the Seine. How many other incidents occurred in which no witnesses survived is impossible to say, but among the dozens of unidentified corpses hauled from the Seine and canals of Paris during the weeks following 17 October were many who must have been the victims of police assassination. As has been seen in Chapter 3 this form of 'parallel' police action was already well established from the end of August 1961 onwards and the events of 17–19 October provided an occasion to accelerate this process with almost total impunity.

[105] Einaudi, *Octobre* 1961, 231–4.

5

The Political Crisis, 18 October to 1 December 1961

The initial response of the media and public opinion towards the events on the night of 17–18 October was one of uncertainty and confusion, in part because it was extremely difficult to gain even an approximate picture of what had happened. Acts of repression were spatially scattered throughout the city, making it difficult to form an overall picture, while journalists and photographers who approached the scenes of action were physically threatened and had rolls of film seized. The most revealing photographs that have survived were taken covertly, at considerable personal risk, by Élie Kagan and Georges Azenstarck, in the semi-dark and without flash (see Photo 7). However, within a matter of days journalists, politicians, and anti-war activists were becoming aware that some terrible event had occurred (or was even ongoing in the detention centres) and the government clampdown on the media only served to fuel speculation and rumour as to the scale of deaths.

Within a week different forms of protest were beginning to coalesce into a significant political challenge to both Papon and the Interior Minister. However, by mid-November the Prefect had weathered this stormy passage, thwarted any official investigation into the killings, and triumphantly declared himself the victor over the FLN in the 'Bataille de Paris'. This chapter examines how Papon was able, with considerable political skill, to surmount the different immediate challenges which he faced during this eight-week crisis, while the longer term response of the extra-parliamentary left is explored in greater detail in Part II.

THE MEDIA RESPONSE

Just after midnight on the night of 17–18 October Papon issued a press release in which he stated that the police had dispersed a demonstration which the mass of Algerians had been forced to attend by militants and that 'gun shots were aimed at the police forces who returned fire'. Two Algerians had been killed and several wounded, while a dozen police officers had been hospitalized. He also announced that the majority of the many thousands arrested would be sent back to Algeria,

including any shop-keepers who followed the FLN strike planned for that day.[1] The Interior Minister, Roger Frey, provided a similar version of events during a session of the National Assembly on the night of 18 October.[2] Most of the national press, unable to form a clear picture of the repression, initially reproduced the official version of events and even berated the government for its failure to prevent invasion of the capital by 'terrorist hordes'. Censorship of the press during the war also induced caution in editors who feared the harsh economic penalty of having an entire edition seized by the police.

However, by the 19 and 20 October the press began to provide a much more detailed coverage and analysis of the events of 17 October, accompanied by photographs by Kagan and others. Newspapers began to include a significant number of eyewitness accounts of police violence while droves of journalists visited for the first time the segregated *bidonvilles* where they were shocked by the material squalor and by evidence of extreme police brutality, not only on the night of the 17 October, but also during a campaign of systematic terror, killings, and 'disappearances' that had been going on for months.[3] By 19 October the press began to show growing disquiet with the official version and it was widely acknowledged that the demonstrators had been unarmed and entirely pacific. Questions were raised as to whether the police had opened fire first, why no arms had been seized from Algerians, whether fatalities were much higher, and if the police had practised a systematic and calculated violence 'à froid'.

Papon, a past-master in the arts of propaganda, quickly moved to counter the growing volume of disquiet expressed in the media. On the eve of the women's demonstration on 20 October Papon issued a communiqué which claimed that FLN gunmen were planning to resort to the 'odious tactic' of using women as a shield from which to fire on the police and precipitate a bloodbath of the innocent. By contrast women and children arrested on the 20 October were directed to reception centres in which journalists were invited to photograph kindly police officers providing shelter, sandwiches, cake, and milk to those rescued from the grip of the 'terrorists'. The Prefecture also orchestrated a massive press and television presence at Orly airport on 19 October when the first contingent of 552 Algerians was flown back to North Africa. These men, who had been detained in the most squalid conditions and subjected to systematic police brutality in holding centres from which journalists had been barred, were now repatriated in the tourist class of Air France: 'Menu list: aperitif, various hors-d'œuvres, roast beef slices in mayonnaise sauce, cooked fruit, pastries and cigarettes on demand'.[4] However, no amount of slick public relations management could contain the growing volume of protest and behind the scenes anti-war and human rights

[1] Text of communiqué in Papon, *Les Chevaux du pouvoir*, 212.

[2] *JODP* (AN), 18 Oct. 1961, 2614–15.

[3] On 20 Oct. police arrested one of the journalists, Jean-Francis Held, inside the Nanterre *bidonvilles*: Hervo, *Chroniques*, 211; APP-HA110, Report of Municipal Police, 21 Oct.

[4] *Le Figaro* (20 Oct. 1961).

activists were building up a considerable dossier of incriminating evidence that provided a basis on which opposition politicians, protected by privilege, could launch a powerful offensive in the Paris Council, Senate, and National Assembly.

POLITICAL CHALLENGE: THE DEMAND FOR A COMMISSION OF INQUIRY

During the last five days of October 1961 Papon and Frey were confronted with a growing volume of detailed evidence of police brutality and by a withering and almost relentless barrage of questioning; first within the Paris Council on 27 October, followed by the National Assembly (30 October) and the Senate (31 October).

In a tumultuous session of the Paris Council Papon and the right deplored the systematic press campaign to discredit and weaken the heroic police force and insisted on the need for stronger anti-terrorist measures and an increased police budget. Moscovitch regretted that the municipality did not have the authority or means to carry out the simplest solution, to place Algerians in ships that would be sunk out at sea.[5] Claude Bourdet, who as editor of *France-Observateur* and a member of the 'new left' Union de la gauche socialiste, had played a key role in the opposition to Papon and the *harkis*, confronted the Prefect with a number of searching questions.[6] He asked whether it was true that no police officer had been wounded by bullets on 17 October; whether police radios had increased tension and violence by spreading rumours that officers had been killed; if fifty Algerians had been killed in a courtyard of the Prefecture while 150 corpses had been recovered from the Seine; and, finally, whether Papon had told police officers on several occasions in September and October that they were 'covered'?[7]

Although Papon, who simply ignored all these questions, survived this first challenge in which Bourdet lost his demand for a commission of inquiry by 39 to 43 votes, worse was to follow. In the National Assembly on 30 October the respected Resistance leader Eugène Claudius-Petit launched a ferocious and eloquent attack on both the police and the Interior Minister. Relying on evidence that he had gathered from eyewitnesses, he detailed a series of acts of police violence and shootings in the Place de l'Étoile, rue de Vaugirard, and elsewhere. Frey had told the National Assembly on the night of 18 October that 132 Algerians had been wounded during the events, but military conscripts serving with a medical team in the Palais des Sports between six and nine in the evening had alone tended 210 wounded men. Some of these had been tended twice by the doctors, 'because they were struck again after receiving medical care and having their wounds sewn up . . . [the doctors] tried as best they could to use water from

[5] *BMO*, 27 Oct. 1961, 637.

[6] On Claude Bourdet's political background see his *Mes batailles* (Ozoir-la-Ferrière: Éditions In Fine, 1993).

[7] *BMO*, 27 Oct., 651–3.

the showers to wash the wounds and even their instruments before sewing the flesh wounds'. Claudius-Petit held up to ridicule Frey's claim that the police had operated with 'strict discipline'. Police repression was descending into open racism, targeting men by the colour of their skin, and into acts of torture that had last been seen in France under the Nazis. Were they about to see 'the shame of the yellow crescent after that of the yellow star' and the unleashing of 'the hideous beast of racism'?[8]

Papon and Frey barely had time to recover from this public mauling when the following day they were confronted in the Senate with a far more dangerous political trap that was meticulously prepared by the Socialist Gaston Defferre. Defferre deliberately set aside second-hand newspaper sources and, referring to a confidential dossier that he had established, provided a detailed catalogue of legal actions opened by Algerians against the police as well as a mass of evidence collected by trade unionists, police officers, and others.[9] This dossier had been secretly established at the request of Defferre by Hervé Bourges, a prominent opponent of the war, editor of *Témoignage chrétien*, and from March 1960 until late August 1961 conseiller technique to the Minister of Justice, Edmond Michelet.[10] Defferre read the letter of one victim of police racist violence but refused to disclose his identity: 'I do not want this unfortunate being who has confided in me to become the target of a search tomorrow and run the risk of finding his body in the Seine, as has happened to so many Muslims in recent days.'[11] Defferre stated that he would disclose all his sources to a parliamentary commission of inquiry.

Frey responded by a long defence of the police, many of whom had lost their lives to terrorist killers, and who were now subject to 'odious rumours' and a systematic 'campaign of denigration'. However, Defferre appeared to have marked a significant victory when the Minister agreed to a commission of inquiry into the events of 17 October on condition that its remit extend to the longer term pattern of FLN assassinations of both police and Algerians. During November, while Pierre Marcilhacy of the Senate's law commission, prepared a technical report on the proposal for an official inquiry, speculation was rife that the way had now been opened to an investigation which could prove extremely dangerous to Papon, Frey, and the government. However, Frey's apparent concession to Defferre was deceptive since he and Papon, who certainly had prior intelligence of the senator's plans, had already taken pre-emptive measures to sabotage a parliamentary commission by instigating twenty-seven judicial inquiries into Algerian deaths on the eve of the Senate debate. Bernard Chenot, the pliant Minister of Justice who had replaced Michelet in August, wrote to Marcilhacy pointing out that under the *ordonnance* of 17 November 1958 no commission of inquiry could be opened into cases that were currently under judicial review which was now the case here. When Marcilhacy finally made his report to Senate on 30 November he noted

[8] *JODP* (AN), 30 Oct., 3604–5. [9] *JODP* (Senate), 31 Oct., 1339–41.
[10] The Archives de la Ville de Marseille, Fonds Gaston Defferre 100 ii 282, contains the dossier sent to Gaston Defferre on 30 Oct. 1961. [11] *JODP* (AN), 31 Oct., 1340.

with 'astonishment' that judicial investigations of the numerous corpses found between 18 and 21 October had not been opened within forty-eight hours as was normal practice, but had rather been shelved, only to be simultaneously resurrected and registered on 30 October, the very day before Defferre submitted his proposal.[12] Papon was an old hand at this blocking tactic: he and Baylot had impeded investigation of the police shooting of Algerians on 14 July 1953 by opening legal action against 'person/s unknown' for 'combined armed rebellion'.[13] Frey and Papon sought to open an action against 'person/s unknown' on the night of 8–9 February 1962 immediately following the police killings at Charonne.[14] Everybody knew that the opposition had been out-manœuvred and although the Senate continued to debate the proposal for an inquiry until 14 December, the issue was effectively killed off by early November.

THE RESPONSE OF DE GAULLE'S GOVERNMENT

Little is known about either official or informal reactions to 17 October at the higher levels of government. De Gaulle and his ministers make virtually no reference to the events in their memoirs, while access to key documents of the Élysée, Matignon, and Interior Ministry remain closed.[15] State collusion with police repression can however be interpreted within the broader political context of negotiation with the GPRA and the final stages of the move towards the Évian accords of March 1962. Many commentators in late 1961 and since have remarked on the enigma as to why violence reached a peak in Paris just as both sides were moving into the final rounds of negotiation. Part of the answer lies in the fact that both the GPRA and the French government wished to negotiate from a position of strength, a strategy that for the GPRA included mass demonstrations as a symbol of a populist mandate.

Talks between the French and the GPRA stalled between Lugrin on 27 July 1961 and Bâle on 28 October[16] and it was during this three-month 'window' that both sides fought to strengthen their hand before a final play-off. Both sides during this poker match resorted to a theatrical mix of 'tough' and 'soft' messages. On the Algerian side, the replacement of the liberal Ferhat Abbas as president of the GPRA on August 27 by Ben Khedda, perceived incorrectly by the French as a revolutionary Marxist close to both the Soviets and China, seemed to mark a hardening of the FLN position. On the other hand the orders of the GPRA to halt attacks on the police and to ensure that street demonstrations should be entirely pacific was part of a strategy intended to reassure public opinion of FLN good

[12] *JODP* (Senate), 30 Nov., 2264; 14 Dec. 1961, 2580.
[13] Rajsfus, *1953*, 150.
[14] Brunet, *Charonne*, 291.
[15] On this official amnesia see Brigitte Gaïti, 'Les Ratés de l'histoire', 30–1.
[16] Malek, *L'Algérie à Évian*, 180–1.

intentions and a proof of inter-communal tolerance that could help allay the anxiety of *pieds-noirs* about their position within an independent Algeria.

Likewise, the French government demonstrated a mix of 'hard' and 'conciliatory' signals. The most widely accepted interpretation of de Gaulle's overall strategy on Algeria is that he had, from the very beginning of the Fifth Republic, decided to disentangle France from the colony but, given the enormous and dangerous weight of opposition, he could only achieve this through a series of carefully calculated moves towards independence. Each major 'concession' on the route to independence was balanced by deepening military action (e.g. the Challe plan), repression, or ambiguous pronunciations which would keep those favourable to *Algérie française* on side or lulled into a false security, until, too late, they realized the pass had been sold. Brigitte Gaïti argues that de Gaulle resorted to just such a double game, what she has termed 'the production of uncertainty', between July and October 1961. He did not wish to reveal his hand to the GPRA before resumption of negotiations and at the same time masked from the French political right and the settlers an underlying and inexorable move to 'abandonment'.[17] On 5 September de Gaulle, by recognizing the sovereignty of a future Algerian state over the Sahara, removed one of the key barriers to a final settlement. At the same time the President 'balanced' this out with a number of 'hard' ploys to sustain pressure on the GPRA and to confuse and divide supporters of *Algérie française*.

A crucial element in the crisis of repression in Paris was de Gaulle's persistance in retaining Debré, one of the most vociferous supporters of *Algérie française*, as Prime Minister. On 18 August the President refused to accept Debré's resignation while insisting that he implement a programme of disengagement from Algeria.[18] Debré was a crucial, if tortured, figurehead in the Gaullist seduction of the right. At the same time, as a quid pro quo, de Gaulle seems to have given Debré considerable licence to take the battle to the FLN. The removal of Michelet as Minister of Justice on 24 August cleared the path for more 'muscular' and illegal forms of repression. Even if some form of Algerian autonomy was now unavoidable Debré clung to the hope that negotiations could be with some moderate force rather than the detested and feared FLN. With this aim in mind Debré, working in absolute secrecy, established a new 'Third Force' political movement, the Front algérien d'action démocratique (FAAD), to provide a compliant organization with which the French state could enter into negotiation. The FAAD experiment, which generated further clandestine killings in Paris and Algiers, was eventually closed down by de Gaulle's order on 20 October on the eve of renewed negotiations with the GPRA (see Chapter 6).[19] Similarly, Debré placed strong hope in the proposal developed by Alain Peyrefitte for an apartheid solution under which

[17] Gaïti, 'Les Ratés de l'histoire', 22–3.

[18] De Gaulle, *Lettres, notes et carnets: Janvier 1961–décembre 1962* (Paris: Plon, 1986), 126.

[19] Maurice Faivre, 'Services secrets et "Troisième Force": Le Front algérien d'action démocratique, de 1960 à 1962', in Maurice Vaïsse (ed.), '*Il n'est point de secrets que le temps ne révèle': Étude sur l'histoire du renseignement* (Paris: Éditions Lavauzelle, 1998).

the *pieds-noirs* would carve out a separate state in the coastal cities of northern Algeria. But for de Gaulle the Peyrefitte plan, which certainly worried the FLN, was simply another tactical ploy and he ordered the project to be terminated in November as contact with the GPRA was resumed.[20]

During July to October 1961 Debré and his close associates were given space by de Gaulle to engage in various psychological warfare and hard-line strategies to place pressure on the FLN. A key component in this 'production of uncertainty' was the decision taken to grant significant autonomy to the Paris police to engage in systematic violence and repression. While certain key decisions, such as the imposition of a curfew or the mass repatriation to Algeria, were debated and approved by the Council of State (*Conseil d'État*), the more endemic forms of police terror were a consequence of secret state collusion rather than of formal procedures or written orders that could leave a trace. A general feature of state terror is that police agents or death squads operate with considerable autonomy outside the official chains of command so that governments can, if necessary, maintain a 'plausible denial' of involvement.[21] Just as Papon assured rank-and-file officers that they were 'covered' for acts of repression, so Papon in turn knew that he was 'covered' higher up the chain of command by the heads of state. The extreme anti-Algerian violence which deepened during September–October 1961 was less a symptom of uncontrollable and free-booting elements within the force than an instrument of government policy.

The paroxysm of police violence on 17 October had, within under two weeks, served its purpose as a negotiating weight and at the very moment that de Gaulle moved to reopen contact with the GPRA he called a stop to Debré's anti-FLN offensive by closing down the FAAD and ditching the Peyrefitte plan to dismember Algeria. The same applied to the violence in Paris, and by 28 October, when envoys reconvened in Bâle, both French and FLN leaders implicitly acknowledged that it was in their mutual interest to quietly pass on and 'forget' the bloody events of 17 October.[22] In addition it should be noted that 17 October was just one in an almost endless sequence of massacres: for example, during demonstrations in Algeria to mark the seventh anniversary of the uprising of 1 November, seventy-four Algerians were shot dead by the police and army, while the OAS threatened further carnage.[23] Negotiators, far from allowing 'crises of war' to get in the way of settlement, regarded a speedy transition to independence as an urgent necessity if a further slide into anarchy and massive loss of life was to be prevented.

Papon felt sufficiently vulnerable after 17 October that he concocted, with the aid of a report from Montaner and the SCAA, a far-fetched FLN plot to engineer

[20] Alain Peyrefitte, *C'était de Gaulle* (Paris: Fayard, 1994), 76–92.

[21] Sluka, *Death Squads*, 5.

[22] Malek, *L'Algérie à Évian*, 177, notes that the GPRA interpreted 17 Oct. as a 'a classic step of any established power to increase pressure on the enemy at the very moment that they are preparing to negotiate'.

[23] *Le Monde* (3 Nov. 1961); *El Moudjahid*, 87 (22 Nov. 1961; Yugoslavian reprint, Aug. 1962), iii. 622–3.

his downfall because of his supposed success in his battle against terrorism in Paris.[24] This fabrication then became a central plank in a key report prepared by Roger Wuillaume, Inspecteur général de l'administration: the FLN intention on 17 October was to provoke police brutality, so obtaining 'the removal of the present Prefect of Police' and to 'equally reach the Interior Minister'.[25] However, this attempt to reinforce Papon was unnecessary since it was unlikely that de Gaulle would choose to discipline or remove the Prefect and weaken the government's position just as it was about to reopen negotiations with the GPRA. Moreover, de Gaulle appears to have approved of Papon's 'no nonsense' style in 'holding' Paris and retained confidence in him as Prefect right down to 1967.[26] De Gaulle's brand of Olympian leadership was not to concern himself with 'minor' issues like 17 October unless they spilt over into some more significant crisis of authority.

As long as Papon retained the backing of his masters his personal position was safe, but at the same time he needed to engage in damage limitation and head off any problem that might develop into a more serious and public 'scandal'. Papon still faced danger from three directions, from welfare reformers, the police, and the judiciary, and we look next at how these challenges were neutralized.

THE OPPOSITION OF SOCIAL REFORMERS

While Papon, like so many in the security services, regarded welfare programmes as secondary to, and an instrument of, repressive military and police strategies to crush the FLN, there was an opposing current of opinion that genuinely believed that only a large-scale programme of social and economic reform would persuade the mass of Algerians of the benefits of *Algérie française* and remove support for the FLN. Among this latter group were those who also recognized the fundamental contradiction between reformist and repressive objectives and saw that any welfare programmes tainted with policing and intelligence purposes would inevitably alienate Algerians. From the moment that the SAT was created in August 1958 there had existed a concealed tension between police and welfare interests and this was to come to a head during the crisis of 1961.

A key role in the overall coordination of welfare policy was played by Michel Massenet, appointed in January 1959 as Délégué à l'action sociale pour les Français musulmans algériens en Métropole,[27] who believed in a strict separation

[24] APP-H1B35, report of informer 'Dupont' to Montaner, 28 Oct. 1961, claiming the aim of the FLN was to 'Bring down the Prefect of Police'. APP-HA65, Report by Montaner, which inflated this into the theory that 17 Oct. was planned by the FLN as part of a 'psychological offensive' to bring down Papon.

[25] APP-HA111, *Rapport de Monsieur Roger Wuillaume, Inspecteur général de l'administration*, to the Interior Minister, 4 Dec. 1961, p. 3.

[26] Papon, *Les Chevaux du pouvoir*, 215, 229.

[27] On Massenet and the complex welfare programme for Algerians see Viet, *La France immigrée*, 184–217.

between social welfare and all forms of policing. Massenet was hostile to the SAT, manned by military officers, which reproduced the mix of welfare and intelligence function that had proved to be so catastrophic to the SAS programme in Algeria.[28] As has been noted (Chapter 3) Massenet was deeply concerned by the cycle of police repression which had begun after mid-July and the damage that violence was doing to social welfare programmes.[29] After 17 October Massenet wrote two reports in which he noted 'the assassinations, attempted murders and death threats made against migrants who have no involvement in politics', and warned about the appalling situation in the detention centres after 17 October. However, his attempts to alert the Prime Minister, the Minister of Justice, and other leading figures in government went unheeded and Massenet concluded, with some bitterness, that he lacked sufficient status and political weight 'to bring a halt to the pointless outburst of violence'. Massenet described the repression of 17 October as inflicting incalculable damage on the efforts of his team to improve the social conditions of Algerian migrants: 'the work of several years has been destroyed in a few days' and had unleashed 'a dramatic outburst of racism in the metropolis'. Repression of the entire Algerian community had simply reinforced the FLN and initiated a 'dialectic of rupture' that could only work to the benefit of the GPRA during any negotiations.

The only person of any influence who paid any attention to Massenet when he contacted her on 23 October was the Secretary of State Nafissa Sid Cara who was in charge of social affairs for North African migrants in the Prime Minister's office. The following day she wrote to Roger Frey to express her anxiety and 'bitterness' at the repressive practices of the police, 'the pointless, hurtful and dangerous nature of the methods being employed'. The unleashing of systematic violence on the mass of 'honest workers who were more concerned with finding protection than committing acts of aggression' could only build up bitter resentment that would have 'the most regrettable political consequences'. It was unacceptable that social welfare carried out over several years should be 'paralysed by the interference of police measures'.[30] Sid Cara wrote again on 28 October, documenting specific instances of police violence which she wished to see investigated by the Red Cross or some other body independent of the police.[31] Frey did hand this over to the Prefecture for investigation which eventually reported that plaintiffs now wished to 'withdraw' the allegations which were described as a tissue of lies or the work of febrile imaginations.[32] Between them the Interior Minister and the Prefect had little difficulty in fending off the challenge from lower ranking officials like Massenet and Sid Cara and the dossier was closed down with bored cynicism and safely buried from public gaze and the media.

[28] Mathias, *Les Sections administratives spécialisées*, 232–6.
[29] CAC 770391, art. 8. Massenet to secrétaire général pour les affaires algériennes, 15 Sept. 1961.
[30] APP-HA111, Sid Cara to Roger Frey, 24 Oct. 1961.
[31] APP-HA110, Sid Cara to Roger Frey, 28 Oct. 1961.
[32] APP-HA110, Director of Municipal Police to Somveille, 15 Nov. 1961; Papon to Frey, 18 Nov. 1961.

However, anger among social workers continued to seethe. In a meeting on 14 November of the conseillers techniques aux affaires musulmanes (CTAM), social welfare administrators attached to the Prefecture of the Seine, a senior officer accused the police of unleashing 'a climate of terror' after 17 October. Papon's standard response was to bully the official through disciplinary action and to open a police file on him.[33] In another meeting of social welfare agencies for the Department of the Seine on 7 December it was reported that the mass arrests of October had severely damaged the position of Algerians in the employment market. This situation would be made worse by new proposals for further restrictions on Algerian migration and this was attacked by the head of an agency for North African women as yet another, 'vexatious and racially discriminatory measure . . . We are living on a volcano, the Muslim population is about to rise in revolt.' The Prefecture de Police, and the SAT in particular, was described as 'a repressive organization'. However, Frey and Papon faced little difficulty in smothering any turbulence among lower level functionaries who shared a work ethic that prevented them from going public or were bullied into submissive silence.

THE CRISIS WITHIN THE POLICE FORCE

A far greater political danger to Papon arose from deep internal divisions within the Paris police force: not all officers were behind the Prefect or backed the government's wider political programme and the October crisis opened up the 'space' for a political challenge that threatened the position of the head of the force. Rank-and-file officers were deeply disturbed by the growing press revelations of violence during and after 17 October, by the establishment on 31 October of a Senate commission of inquiry, and by the dissemination of two explosive pamphlets, the anonymous *Un groupe de policiers républicains déclare* (dated 31 October), and *Face à la répression*, published by the Union régionale parisienne des syndicats CFTC (30 October). The first tract provided a catalogue of horrific police killings and torture in the Parc des Expositions, at the Austerlitz Métro, in the courtyard of the Prefecture, and at the Saint-Denis police station, while hundreds had been thrown into the Seine at the Pont de Neuilly and Saint-Michel.[34] There was much speculation among the police and anti-war activists as to whether the document, which contained a mix of exaggeration and truth, was an act of 'provocation' by Communists or shady 'ultra' right elements.[35] The CFTC *Face à la répression*, was in substance a far

[33] APP-HA60, Berenguier to Prefect of Police, 21 Nov.; Papon to Ministry of the Interior (n.d.).

[34] 'Un groupe de policiers républicains déclare', Paris, 31 Oct. 1961: copies can be located in APP-H1B35 and H1B26.

[35] The author was Émile Portzer, a Communist militant who had been illegally expelled from the police force by the right-wing Prefect, Jean Baylot. Portzer threw the typewriter used to produce the tract into the Seine: see Einaudi, *Octobre 1961*, 300–1.

more formidable document: based on the collation of evidence from trade unionists, including Algerians, it established a closely documented account of the campaign of police terror from early September, the operation of 'parallel' squads, the extreme brutality during and after 17 October, and argued for the need to halt the systematic slide towards an illegal 'police state' that was breaking away from democratic control.[36]

The growing body of revelations, combined with the threat of parliamentary and judicial investigation, sowed panic among the ranks of the SGP, the most important of the police unions with 11,000 members or 75 per cent of unionized officers in Paris. During a long debate in the SGP Conseil syndical on 7 November it was widely acknowledged that the police had indeed been involved in many acts of unprecedented brutality and even murder: the issue the delegates confronted was whether the SGP, which prided itself on its tradition of legality, should protect colleagues who had indulged in 'excesses'. The majority opinion was that prime responsibility lay with Papon and other senior commanders who had for several months encouraged a climate of systematic violence, rather than with low-ranking officers (*lampistes*). But now the bosses in the Prefecture were trying to cover themselves by looking for support from the major union, the SGP, a support that the delegates did not wish to provide. It was widely feared that the trade union would be torn apart by growing tension between those officers who had engaged in violence and looked for security in *omerta*, a united silence, and those who refused to be associated with moves to cover up criminal acts. A compromise was reached in the position that it was not the role of the SGP to inform on colleagues, but that if parliamentary or judicial inquiry uncovered evidence against individuals they would have to carry the consequences.

For Frey and Papon warning bells were ringing, and for the Prefect in particular the growing signs of a split in the force and the danger of a public scandal brought back memories of the police crisis of 13 March 1958 which had brought down his predecessor Lahillone. Frey and Papon engineered a clever escape strategy by taking legal action on 7 November against the anonymous authors of the *Groupe de policiers* tract for 'public defamation of the police'. Papon then approached the SGP to become a joint plaintiff, so skilfully binding the union into a united front that would maintain the traditional closed ranks of 'la maison'. On 13 November the SGP Commission administrative met in an emergency session to debate its response to Papon. The delegates expressed astonishment that the Prefect had taken legal action against the *Groupe de policiers* tract, a flawed and suspect document that would clearly not stand up to scrutiny in court, while ignoring the CFTC publication, which was 'much more serious for the service . . . a document of damning precision'. It was thought that Papon was manœuvring the SGP to publicly 'take up position against a worthless tract', one that he could easily refute

[36] *Face à la répression* (Paris, 30 Oct. 1961), 18 pp. Copies in APP-H1B35 and H1B26.

in court, but in doing so he could present himself as the 'generous and well intentioned defender of the lower ranks'.[37]

In a meeting with the SGP leaders the next day Papon confirmed, with breathtaking cynicism, that this was indeed the logic. He and Frey had taken legal action against the *Groupe de policiers* tract, the union reported, because 'it does not provide any detailed cases into which an investigation could be opened', while this was not true of the CFTC pamphlet, 'because it contains precise examples with locations, dates, names, and which could only be contested after detailed investigation'.[38] Papon's strategy was to manipulate public opinion by diverting attention away from well-documented evidence of police violence towards anonymous and dubious accusations that could not be substantiated.[39]

However, the crisis was not yet over for Papon since the SGP Commission administrative of 13 November refused to join the libel action: the trade unionists objected strongly to providing a cover for superiors who had actively encouraged systematic violence. 'Murders have been committed by the municipal police', and violence had been encouraged by 'the bosses', 'these acts had been explicitly encouraged in advance and protection guaranteed'.[40] Even worse for Papon was that the journalist Michel Legris wrote a well-informed exposure in *Le Monde* of the internal crisis within the Paris police force, the refusal of many officers to conceal the extreme brutality of 17 October, the hesitation of the SGP to join the legal action initiated by Papon and Frey, and the fear expressed by trade unionists that extreme right-wing or fascist networks were operating in the police force and needed to be 'purged'.[41] Papon moved immediately: informed on the eve of 13 November of the pending article he sent a motorcycle dispatch rider to summon Rouve, General Secretary of the SGP, to a meeting the following day.

Rouve, and the other SGP leaders, subjected to intense pressure by Papon, made an about face and in a further emergency meeting of the Commission administrative on 16 November the union agreed to join the legal action against the tract. The forty-three Commission members were still deeply torn by the issue of a possible cover-up of violence, but two factors helped produce a volte-face. First, delegates were picking up strong signals from rank-and-file members, many of whom felt vulnerable because of their own involvement in violence, who preferred to see a united front by joining the libel action. Second, Papon argued he had done everything possible in relation to the government to fight for protection of the police service, including the imposition of a night curfew, and now the SGP should reciprocate this: 'we must make common front against all these attacks, not find ourselves isolated, and since solidarity had always been upheld in the force (*la maison*), he [Papon] expects to find the trade union organizations

[37] Archives SGP-FO, Minutes of Commission administrative extraordinaire (CAE), 13 Nov. 1961, 14, 25–6.
[38] Archives SGP-FO, Minutes of CAE, 16 Nov. 1961, 2–3.
[39] On this manipulation see also Papon's reply to Denis Perier-Daville in *Le Figaro* (8 and 10 Nov. 1961).
[40] Archives SGP-FO, Minutes of CAE, 13 Nov.
[41] *Le Monde* (14 Nov. 1961), Michel Legris, 'Un profond malaise règne dans la police parisienne'.

backing him'.[42] He indicated that he would provide certain 'guarantees' or 'cover' for any acts committed during the demonstration, but made it clear that if the SGP refused to cooperate he would do nothing to protect individuals from the investigations that would follow, a threat that one delegate described as 'blackmail'. At the same time, Papon presented himself as a champion of justice, by noting that a full internal inquiry was under way and that if any 'high level officers' were found guilty they would be more severely dealt with than junior ranks. Papon stated, 'I am determined to clean-up this establishment (*la maison*), but I will only do this once the Prefecture of Police is out of trouble',[43] a promise that was never kept.

Papon's skilful deployment of carrot and stick achieved its aims and the SGP, fearing that the union would be torn apart, closed ranks with the Prefect. By 16 November Papon appears to have weathered the storm and to have prevented a highly damaging and public schism in the police force that would have laid bear the massive and illegal violence of 17 October. However, the force continued to be torn by bitter tensions, dating from the Vichy era, between extreme right-wing elements and liberals deeply attached to traditions of Republican legality and democracy. Within a month this internal 'civil war' was to burst into the open in the events surrounding the anti-fascist demonstration of 19 December, but by then the political agenda had crucially shifted from the issue of anti-Algerian violence to the threat that a resurgent French left perceived to be offered to democracy by the OAS and fascism (see Part II).

THE 'GANGRENING' OF THE FRENCH JUDICIAL PROCESS

A third source of potential danger to Papon was presented by judicial investigation of the many hundreds of cases of police homicide and violence perpetrated on Algerians during September and October 1961. However, when Papon showed total equanimity in opening judicial case-files as a means to sabotage the Defferre commission of inquiry it was with good reason since the process of criminal investigation lay almost entirely within the hands of the Prefecture of Police. As this section indicates, the judiciary was almost powerless to challenge the corrupted dossiers fed to it by the police.

When the corpse of a North African was discovered, victim of a possible homicide, the police, contrary to normal practice, frequently proceeded to a preliminary investigation and then simply filed the case away without any further action (*classement sans suite*) and without the case even being referred to an examining magistrate (*juge d'instruction*). In his report on the judicial archives

[42] Archives SGP-FO, Minutes of CAE, 16 Nov. 1961, 4. [43] Ibid. 11.

Jean Géronimi found that within the court district of the Seine during 1961 the majority of dossiers (108 files concerning 116 individuals) followed this track. While this procedure was strictly legal, it was only applied to Algerian victims, while all other instances of homicide automatically led to the constitution of a formal legal investigation (*ouverture d'information*).[44] Pierre Marcilhacy, spokesman of the Senate's law commission was so astonished by the failure to systematically open judicial cases in relation to Algerians that he wrote to the Minister of Justice who replied by excusing this exceptional practice in the blandest terms.[45]

One reason for the proliferation of such a discriminatory practice was that the majority of victims were poor Algerian migrant workers who had no family or other relatives present in Paris to initiate a formal judicial procedure. Secondly, Algerians who commenced legal proceedings exposed themselves to considerable danger from the police, as Massenet told the Minister of the Justice in a private meeting on 27 October.[46] Even when complaints were registered, many subsequent cases collapsed since Algerian witnesses were too frightened to attend police interview or changed their accounts under threatening interrogation procedures. In many dossiers closed and filed away without judicial investigation Algerians were denoted as victims of 'car accidents', death by 'natural causes' or 'for reasons unknown', when there was evidence to demonstrate that the police had been responsible (see Chapter 6).

One channel that remained open to Algerians who wished to lodge a complaint against police violence was to write to the Commission de sauvegarde des droits et libertés individuels, a kind of legal ombudsman established by the Mollet government in May 1957 to allay public concern at revelations of torture and other inhumane and illegal acts committed by the police and army. However, the members of the Commission were obliged to maintain secrecy and they were deprived of any legal powers of investigation. During 1961 both the SCAA and Papon expressed irritation at Commission inspections of detention centres in Paris: for example, Viatte, following a visit to the CIV on 26 October 1961, produced a damning report on the 'appalling spectacle' of the conditions under which Algerians, many of them with head wounds, were being held.[47] But in general the Commission was powerless to challenge the police and military and its main function was to legitimate a government that was profoundly implicated in systematic violence and killings.[48] Maurice Patin, the president, wrote to Debré in July 1961 to express the demoralization of the commissioners faced with marginalization and government hostility.[49]

[44] Géronimi Report, 4, 26.
[45] Ibid. 8. Minister of Justice to Marcilhacy, 9 Nov. 1961.
[46] CAC-770391, art. 8. Massenet, *Déroulement des événements*, 3.
[47] Einaudi, *Octobre 1961*, 283–6.
[48] The archives of the Commission de sauvegarde await closer investigation, but see Raphaëlle Branche, 'La Seconde Commission de sauvegarde des droits et libertés individuels', in *La Justice en Algérie, 1830–1962* (Paris: La Documentation française, 2005); and Faivre, *Conflits d'autorités*, 93–151, 259–68.
[49] Thénault, *Une drôle de justice*, 265–6.

However, despite the ability of the Prefecture to simply file away cases of Algerian homicide without proper investigation, it could not prevent some instances of judicial investigation that might have proved embarrassing. In this instance an investigating magistrate was appointed who, in most instances, then instructed the Police judiciaire (PJ) or the Inspection générale des services (IGS) through an official order (*commission rogatoire*) to interview witnesses, gather evidence, and draw up a final report. Contrary to the conclusion of the Géronimi Report that police services were diligent and efficient in the search for truth, the archival dossiers reveal an extraordinary degree of corrupt practices, from bureaucratic inertia, deceit, and 'lost' files to the outright suppression of evidence. The final reports of IGS inspectors were composed in a cynical and provocative style that betrayed both a transparent contempt for the judiciary as well as a sense of invulnerability from the higher court authorities. An IGS commissioner disclosed to Gérard Monate of the SGP that Papon had given specific instructions that they should write up reports so as to clear or cover police officers accused of violence.[50]

A range of standard arguments and procedures was deployed by the Prefecture to undermine or block proper judicial investigation. The credibility of Algerian witnesses, invariably described as FLN sympathizers 'known to our services' or motivated by an 'anti-police' bias, was undermined.[51] The surge of killings and woundings, most certainly due to police actions, was invariably ascribed without any evidence to internecine Algerian conflicts. When Algerians were able to provide precise descriptions of their police assailants the investigating service would report an inability to locate the officers concerned or refused an opportunity to identify them through photographs or a 'confrontation'. In some instances lawyers were unable to proceed with actions against the police because the victims were arrested and spirited away to Algeria.[52] Through the systematic and illegal interception of mail and telephone communication between FLN lawyers and their clients the Prefecture could parry in advance any 'difficult' cases.[53] But the most effective block was deliberate delay in police investigations: case-files were stalled in the administrative machine and dragged out for months and years until eventually the amnesty measures introduced at the end of the war terminated in a 'non-lieu' (see Chapter 9).

The extent to which higher authorities colluded in a whitewash of police repression is most clearly revealed in the two key reports by Roger Wuillaume and Papon on the events of 17 October. The government attempted to pre-empt pressure for a public inquiry by announcing its own high-level investigation. The Interior Minister mandated Roger Wuillaume, Inspecteur général de l'administration and a pliant creature of the establishment, to investigate police actions during

[50] Brunet, *Police contre FLN*, 119–25.
[51] Einaudi, *Octobre 1961*, 255, for the example of M. Sebbah.
[52] Ibid. 279–80, 325.
[53] APP-H1B30 contains a huge volume of microfilm of intercepted letters exchanged between FLN prisoners and their lawyers.

and after 17 October. In 1955 Wuillaume had carried out an official investigation into the use of torture in Algeria which he found endemic in the police and army. Since, he concluded, torture was 'remarkably' successful in the war on terrorism it should be officially sanctioned and regulated by the Police judiciaire, while 'heroic' officers who had engaged in past torture should not be stigmatized but receive 'rewards and letters of congratulation'.[54]

Wuillaume's secret 'preliminary' report of 4 December on the events of 17 October, based on dubious investigations carried out by Papon's own inspectors, provided a complete vindication of the Prefecture of Police. The objective of the FLN, he claimed, was to destabilize the police and to obtain Papon's dismissal by organizing a demonstration that would provoke a violent and bloody police response. While he admitted that there may have been 'a few unjustifiable or reprehensible blows with gun stocks', 'only' 337 wounded Algerians had been hospitalized. Overall the police had acted with exemplary courage and 'sang-froid', and to date no evidence had been found against the police in the thirty-five legal cases opened by the Parquet.[55] No promised final report was ever produced or made public, and the 'interim' report having served its purpose of fending off parliamentary investigation, was quietly shelved and forgotten.[56]

The second important report on the 17 October prepared by Papon was sent to the Prime Minister, President de Gaulle, and the Interior Minister on 26 December.[57] The Prefect's enquiry centred on thirty-five 'priority' cases that had been referred by the Parquet on 16 November, identical to the cases that Wuillaume also placed at the heart of his investigation. A close examination of the thirty-five 'priority' dossiers, none of which had been handed over to examining magistrates, reveals a rag-bag of incidents, many of them patently trivial or devoid of strong corroborative evidence. The dossiers do not include any of the numerous cases in which evidence of police violence was the most detailed and damaging, and it would appear that the Wuillaume–Papon investigations had selected as the most 'important' dossiers precisely those which could be most easily rebutted. In his report Papon had no problem in going through the evidence in each case and, with heavy sarcasm, shooting down the straw men he had set up and dismissing them as riddled with contradictions and 'mendacious charges engineered by the FLN'. As with his decision to take libel action against the flawed *Groupe de policiers* tract rather than the CFTC pamphlet, Papon threw up a smokescreen by concentrating investigation on cases

[54] The full text of the Wuillaume Report, 2 Mar. 1955, is in Vidal-Naquet, *La Raison d'état*, 55–68.

[55] APP-HA111, *Rapport de Monsieur Roger Wuillaume, Inspecteur général de l'administration*, to the Interior Minister, 4 Dec. 1961, 10 pp.

[56] See APP-HA111, George Sarre, *Question écrite à l'Assemblée nationale* (9 Nov. 1981).

[57] APP-HA110, Papon, *Enquêtes effectuées au sujet de plaintes contre la police, consécutives aux manifestations du 17 octobre 1961*, 26 Dec. 1961.

presented as the most urgent or significant, but which were in reality selected because they were the weakest.

While Papon and the Ministers of the Interior and of Justice succeeded in covering over police violence by ensuring that investigation was carried out in secrecy away from the eye of the courts or parliamentary inquiry, senior judges began to show deep disquiet at growing signs of a perversion of justice. On 27 October Aydalot, the Chief Public Prosecutor (*procureur général*) of Paris wrote to the Minister of Justice, Chenot, to draw his attention to a massive increase in the number of Algerians killed since 1 September.[58] He insisted that a proper legal dossier (*information*) be constituted in each case, which Chenot agreed to do on 10 November. Aydalot instructed the twenty-one *juges d'instruction* involved to pursue the new cases opened up, 'with the utmost diligence'.[59] Here was a much greater threat to Papon than that constituted by the thirty-five bogus dossiers hotly pursued by himself and Wuillaume. However, in the majority of these cases the examining magistrates still relied on the police to carry out the investigation through judicial warrants (*commissions rogatoires*) and the principal blocking tactic of the Prefecture was to spin out the process interminably, particularly as it became increasingly apparent from early 1961 that negotiations with the FLN would end in a settlement that was to include an amnesty for crimes committed during the 'events'. On 26 February 1962 Aydalot complained to Chenot that of 186 investigation orders issued by examining magistrates to the police, 147 had not been acted on. 'If one wishes to throw some light on the corpses that have been discovered', and especially on the worrying increase during October, it would be necessary to place pressure on Papon so that he would 'give detailed instructions to his services for the rapid and complete execution of the judicial warrants (*commissions rogatoires*) and personally ensure that his orders are obeyed'. In order to force Papon's hand he would have to receive a command from ministerial level.[60] However, soon after the Évian agreement was signed on 19 March, two decrees provided an amnesty for all acts committed by security forces during the 'events'. On 15 June 1962 the Paris Prosector produced a report, approved by Chenot, which recommended that all cases relating to murdered Algerians or acts of violence by the police be shelved as 'no case to answer' (*non-lieu*).[61]

As a consequence of the amnesty decrees of 22 March 1962, every one of the legal cases opened during 1961 in relation to the murder or wounding of Algerians in Paris was closed by a 'non-lieu', nor was any police officer ever indicted or tried.[62] The haste with which the French government established an amnesty law was indicative of a desire to place a definitive and watertight seal over the events of the past.

[58] Géronimi Report, 9, 15. [59] Ibid. 9. [60] Ibid. 10. [61] Ibid. 4, 11.
[62] Ibid. 22.

THE GPRA: MARGINALIZATION OF THE PARIS MASSACRE

Strange as it may seem, the political crisis surrounding the events of October 1961 was also rapidly interred due to the decision of the FLN leadership to abandon its plans to gain maximum propaganda value from the police repression in Paris and to pass a sponge over the affair. This needs to be interpreted within the wider context of the profound internal tensions that divided the FLN as it moved closer to peace, and the growing importance of mass popular demonstrations in the political process.

After 1957 the FLN, far from constituting a revolutionary movement, was increasingly controlled by a predatory military and bureaucratic apparatus which worked against democratic participation of the Algerian people, deployed the methods of a police state, and in which the rank and file were expected to obey without question the orders of a hierarchical apparatus, 'situated above and distant from the people'.[63] One of the key turning points of the Algerian War was the moment on 10–11 December 1960 when tens of thousands poured out of the Casbah and Arab–Berber enclaves of Algiers in spontaneous demonstrations shouting the slogans, 'power to Abbas' and 'power to the FLN'. It was these demonstrations of the popular will during de Gaulle's tour of Algeria from 9 December that persuaded the President that the FLN did indeed have the support of the people and that determined him to accelerate final peace negotiations.[64] Other popular demonstrations in Algeria on 5 July 1961 in opposition to the French proposals for partition further emphasized the extent to which the political initiative was swinging towards the 'internal' masses, a trend that the 'external' authoritarian leadership viewed with deep suspicion. Both Ben Tobbal of the GPRA and the military faction of the État-major général led by Boumediene were panicked by 'uncontrolled' mass movements and in 1961–2 a steady flow of orders tried to reassert a firm grip on the rank and file. 'The masses', stated one directive on 28 July, 'must only demonstrate on order of the GPRA. The masses must be forbidden from engaging in certain types of action. Strikes, as a form of action, are to be banned for the moment, since the control and organization of the masses has not been achieved.'[65]

All the available evidence indicates that the demonstrations of 17–20 October in Paris were planned unilaterally by the Comité fédéral in Germany without order from the GPRA. In response to the reign of terror unleashed by Papon in the summer of 1961 and the imposition of the night curfew on 5 October there was

[63] Meynier, *Histoire intérieure*, 28. This is also the thesis of Mohammed Harbi.

[64] Mahfoud Kaddache, 'Les Tournants de la Guerre de libération au niveau des masses populaires', in Charles-Robert Ageron (ed.), *La Guerre d'Algérie et les Algériens 1954–1962* (Paris: Armand Colin, 1997).

[65] Quoted Meynier, *Histoire intérieure*, 207, see also 319, 339; Harbi, *Une vie debout*, 369.

strong pressure from FLN militants in Paris to engage in some form of riposte. The extreme care with which the committee planned 17 October was motivated by a number of considerations: first, to harness the potentially explosive energy of militants in Paris, and to channel this into forms of action that were securely controlled by the leadership. Indeed, as is clear from the heavy fines and punishment inflicted on recalcitrants who tried to avoid taking part, participation was a public test of loyalty as well as a means of disciplining the Algerian community. Second, the Comité fédéral was perfectly aware after December 1960 of the key political function of the mass demonstration in asserting the position of the FLN as the sole representative of the Algerian people in the negotiations for independence.

In the week following 17 October the FLN released a number of press communiqués of which the most important was an *Appel aux Français* of 18 October which denounced the violent repression of the demonstration and appealed to French workers, political militants, students, and intellectuals to organize strikes, demonstrations, meetings, and petitions in support of the Algerians and to demand an urgent negotiation with the GPRA 'to put an end to the living nightmare of both our people'.[66] In Tunis a spokesman for the GPRA Ministry of Information attacked the 'Nazi style' violence that had been unleashed on peacefully demonstrating men, women, and children, and praised this show of popular unity, 'their total support for the orders issued by the GPRA for the national day of action on the 1st of November'.[67] On 22 October M'Hazmed Yazid, the Information Minister, made a press statement in Tunis in which he noted that at the very moment that the GPRA 'is engaged in working with sincerity and patience to create the conditions for a peaceful negotiated solution to the Algerian problem we are witnessing a deepening of colonialist repression'. He detailed the massive arrests in Paris and the death of over fifty demonstrators: 'This is a Battle of Algiers that they want to transfer to Paris.'[68] The GPRA was thus able to use the Paris events to bring pressure to bear on the French government, and this point was reinforced by the President Ben Khedda on 25 October when he attacked the 'blatant genocide' which had been unleashed in France. But the main drive of his statement was to underline the unnecessary loss of life as an argument for an urgent return to negotiation and this priority was linked, behind the scenes, to a decision to rapidly move on and to bury the events of 17 October.[69]

The FLN in Paris clearly planned the demonstration of 17 October with the intention of making a significant propaganda impact on French public and international opinion, but this endeavour seems to have been rapidly quashed by the GPRA. Several days before the 17 October Georges Mattéi, a leading clandestine activist, was asked by Mohammedi Saddek to arrange for a dozen French

[66] APP-HA110; see also reprinted in Le Cour Grandmaison, *Le 17 octobre 1961*, 208–10, but misdated to 22 Oct.

[67] *L'Humanité* (19 Oct. 1961).

[68] *L'Humanité* (23 Oct. 1961).

[69] *Le Monde* (26 Oct. 1961).

observers to be positioned at prearranged locations in the city to record the events during the demonstration.[70] Paulette Péju was commissioned by the Fédération de France to prepare at great speed a detailed account of the events of October, a project that assumed three forms. First, François Maspero published in November *Ratonnades à Paris*, essentially a collation of press extracts, which was quickly banned by Papon.[71] Second, Péju was certainly the author of a booklet titled *Les Manifestations algériennes d'octobre 1961 et la répression colonialiste en France*, a variant of the first but with fifteen photographs by Kagan, published in December 1961 by the GPRA Ministry of Information. This glossy official brochure was almost certainly withdrawn.[72] Finally, Marcel and Paulette Péju prepared a far more detailed study of the October events, *Les Algériens: Le 17 Octobre*, which was to be published by Maspero in the summer of 1962 but was suppressed at the request of the GPRA.[73] In addition the Fédération in Paris issued an order for cadres to send in written reports on the events of 17–20 October, and to provide names and details of all those Algerians who had been killed, wounded, or disappeared. However, this remarkable and extensive body of eyewitness accounts, and the census of dead and injured, was never made public or utilized by the FLN in any form after the 17 October.[74]

Why did the GPRA chose to 'bury' the events of 17 October after November 1961? First, in the complex manœuvring for power that fissured the FLN–ALN as peace approached, there were undoubtedly key 'external' factions that wished to marginalize the influential Fédération de France and which, with good reason, interpreted the Paris demonstrations as a pre-emptive move before the official commemoration of 1 November and as a bid for power in the post-independence order. Secondly, with the resumption of contact between GPRA and French delegates on 28 October, neither side was going to permit recent or even ongoing violence and bloodshed to get in the way of the urgent push to a final negotiated settlement. At the very first meeting on 28 October the French expressed their anxiety in relation to the 'mass demonstrations' unleashed by the FLN on 5 July and 17 October.[75] While the FLN went ahead and turned the screw with mass demonstrations on 1 November, the French did not realize that many Algerian leaders were equally keen to contain or end popular movements. Between 1 and 20 November, FLN propaganda centred almost exclusively on a mass hunger strike by Algerian prisoners throughout France and this served to bury the events

[70] Georges Mattéi, *Libération* (17 Oct. 1980), reprinted in Le Cour Grandmaison, *Le 17 octobre 1961*, 27–30.

[71] Paulette Péju, *Ratonnades à Paris*, 137–93.

[72] Interview (J.H.) with Marcel Péju, Paris 13 June 2002. A copy of this rare publication is in APP-H1B35.

[73] Péju, *Ratonnades à Paris*, preface by P. Vidal-Naquet, 15; Manceron and Remaoun, *D'une rive à l'autre*, 170.

[74] Internal FLN reports exist in two locations: first, in the private archives of Ali Haroun which have been utilized by Jean-Luc Einaudi and Linda Amiri; secondly, APP-H1B35 contains 76 reports which were seized by the DST during 'Opération Flore' on 9–10 Nov. 1961.

[75] Malek, *L'Algérie à Évian*, 188.

of 17 October and to divert attention from the emigrant populace back to those leaders, especially Ben Bella, who also took part in the strike.[76] The official voice of the GPRA, *El Moudjahid*, on 22 November ascribed the opening of negotiations almost solely to the heroic hunger strikes. While the five imprisoned ministers who took part denounced the repression in Paris, the same issue went on to evoke three crucial and 'glorious events' in which the Algerian masses had asserted their power, December 1960, July 1961, and November 1961. October 17 was elided from the 'historic' process.[77]

WAS THERE A VICTOR IN THE 'BATAILLE DE PARIS'?

By mid-November, only four weeks after 17 October, Papon felt confident that he had turned the corner and that the political crisis had been contained: in the City Council on the night of 13 November he could even boast 'that today we can consider ourselves to have won the Battle of Paris'.[78] Papon never wavered from a triumphal position that he further elaborated in *Les Chevaux du pouvoir* (1988), and which can be summarized as follows. Totalitarian FLN cadres had attempted to counter effective policing by organizing the demonstrations in which the great mass of unwilling Algerian migrants had been terrorized into participating. Using the innocent as a shield, FLN gun-men had attempted to provoke police counter-violence so as to stir up massive public opposition. However, the police had calmly defended central Paris from terrorist hordes and then, through mass arrests and intelligence operations, had gone on to impose irreparable damage on the FLN, destroy its structures, prevent the collection of dues, and managed to weaken its grip on the frightened emigrant population. Papon presents himself as the hero who had fulfilled de Gaulle's personal mandate to 'hold Paris' and had simultaneously strengthened the negotiating position of the government at Évian.

This version of events does not, however, stand up to scrutiny. The glowing reports that were produced by the SAT and SCAA on the success of police operations in destroying FLN networks and morale were fatally distorted by a culture of compliance in which officers sought to impress superiors with what they wished to hear. Papon and his SCAA officials concealed or distorted the meaning of the captured FLN directives which gave strict orders to cease all attacks on the police and that the demonstrations of 17–20 October were to be absolutely pacific. These directives were extremely damaging to the government claim that any police violence on 17 October was a legitimate response to the FLN gun-men who fired from the ranks of the demonstrators to provoke a bloodbath. A SCAA report of 1 December selectively quoted from captured FLN documents and changed their dates to give the impression that orders to halt anti-police violence had only

[76] On the prison strike see Haroun, *La 7è Wilaya*, 381–96.
[77] *El Moudjahid*, 87 (22 Nov. 1961; Yugoslavian repr., 1962), iii. 618–21.
[78] *BMO*, Conseil Municipal, 13–14 Nov. 1961, 677.

come *after* the massive defeat of 17–20 October.[79] The SCAA also reported that the FLN structures had been radically dislocated, and that the mass of Algerians was showing signs of resistance to cadres and 'were not at all hostile to French authority and appear to be happy with recent police operations' which had weakened the grip of the FLN.[80] This overly optimistic and distorted analysis was then transmitted up the hierarchy and reached the Conseil interministériel on 15 December which was informed that the 'energetic riposte' of the police had led to 'a noticeable decline in the prestige of the leaders of the rebellion' and a spirit of resistance was developing among 'the toiling Muslim masses'.[81]

Was the FLN effectively destroyed by the October repression? The arrest and interrogation of over 14,000 men certainly led to a temporary dislocation of the clandestine network and of the fund-raising capacity of the organization. An OS leader in a report captured by the DST stated, 'On our return [to Paris] we found that the situation had badly deteriorated because of the repression which was truly terrible—such that several of our leading elements have been arrested and this is why there is a loss of contact with the groups and even between individuals.' In a further note on 3 November he said that he had been unable to make any contact with the organization (OPA), 'since unfortunately they have been arrested and at present we don't know anybody', and only some ninety militants were left.[82] However, the Federation had absented its leading cadres from the 17 October demonstration to prevent their arrest, so the key structures remained intact, despite some momentary disarray. What Papon refused to acknowledge at the time, or later in *Les Chevaux du pouvoir*, since it detracted from his own glory, was that a far greater blow was inflicted on the FLN by the DST 'decapitation' of the leadership in early November than by the so-called 'Battle of Paris'. On 4 November the DST arrested Abderrahmane Farès, the central banker of FLN collections for the whole of France, and on the night of 9–10 November arrested Mohamed Zouaoui, the three controllers of all seven metropolitan *wilayas*, and numerous other leading FLN and French *porteurs de valises*, and seized a mass of documents, money, and weapons.[83] Despite this damage, the two Paris *wilayas*, like FLN networks in general, showed an extraordinary capacity to rapidly recover and reorganize, and by late December the Federation had reasserted the position it had temporarily lost.[84]

The absolutely crucial factor in the dynamism of the Paris FLN was its mass base and support in the Algerian community. Although the FLN forced everyone

[79] APP-H1B35, SCAA report, 1 Dec. 1961, *Au sujet des réactions de la population musulmane au lendemain des dernières opérations de Police*.

[80] APP-HA60, Minutes of the monthly meeting of SAT officers, 6 Dec. 1961 (chaired by Somveille).

[81] APP-HA65, Conseil restreint de sécurité, 15 Dec. 1961, *Note au sujet de l'état d'esprit de la population algérienne à Paris et dans le département de la Seine* (SCAA, 14 Dec.).

[82] APP-H1B21, documents seized by the DST on 9–10 Nov. 1961.

[83] The key synthesis report is in APP-H1B16, *Rapport d'ensemble de la DST (14 novembre 1961)*, 32 pp.; MacMaster and House, 'La Fédération de France'.

[84] APP-HA59, CTAM Report, Interior Ministry, 4ème trimestre (1 Oct.–31 Dec. 1961).

to participate during 17 October and later disciplined recalcitrants, the majority of Algerians held a deep and often burning commitment to the struggle for independence. SCINA, the national intelligence agency, reported on 26 October that few fines had been imposed for non-attendance, probably 'for the simple reason that the reluctant were few in number'. The key lesson to be learnt from the demonstrations was 'this support of the masses for FLN orders', and intelligence showed 'the Muslims are proud to have demonstrated. They are proud to have given proof of their cohesion and strength and to have protested against measures that they judge to be discriminatory and humiliating.'[85] A CTAM report arrived at the same conclusion: participants in the demonstrations 'did not all come along happily', but even those constrained had after the event 'felt an undisguised pride on seeing the strength that their masses represented'. The level of police violence had been unexpected and a shock, but had given rise in the following days 'to a stronger cohesion between Muslims who felt joined in solidarity'.[86]

The considerable number of reports drawn up by lower ranking FLN members on the events, while often reflecting the 'heroic' rhetoric of nationalist discourse, also convey the unmistakable joy, pride, and determination with which so many men and women set out to march through Paris on 17 October (see Photo 6). This was particularly true of those women who demonstrated on 20 October with enormous courage, although they were fully aware of the horrific violence that had already been deployed. The anti-war activist Paul Thibaud also noted after the demonstrations the 'general feeling of pride' among Algerians, in spite of their fear and the use of FLN pressure and fines. The commonly held view that Algerians were victims trapped between 'two terrorisms', that of the FLN and the police, was seriously flawed since there was a fundamental difference between force exercised by the police from the exterior and pressure exercised on individuals from within their own community: 'very often this pressure, when all is said and done, is accepted even by those who are on the receiving end'.[87] By 1961 the FLN, no matter how authoritarian and demanding, undoubtedly represented the majority of the Algerian people and mobilized them in support of the emancipation struggle.[88]

The analysis and strategy of Papon and his senior SAT–SCAA officers, underpinned by the theory of revolutionary warfare, had always been flawed by the inability to recognize that rank-and-file FLN militants might be genuinely inspired by fervent nationalism, rather than being the passive victims of a minority of 'terrorists'. Papon, in his fatal arrogance, completely misunderstood or underestimated the powerful and deep-rooted conviction that determined most Algerians to continue with their struggle in the face of the most terrible forms of repression. The police strategy which, in principle, was intended to identify and isolate the

[85] APP-HA47, Minutes of SCINA meeting 26 Oct. 1961, emphasis in the original.
[86] APP-HA59, CTAM Report, 4ème trimestre.
[87] Paul Thibaud, 'Avant les manifestations', *Vérité-Liberté*, 13 (Nov. 1961), 7.
[88] Meynier, *Histoire intérieure*, 154.

minority of 'terrorists' from the mass of potentially pro-French migrant workers, in reality worked in the quite opposite direction. In effect Papon engaged in a system of collective punishment and generalized repression and terror that only succeeded in driving the mass of Algerians deeper into the arms of the nationalist movement. In this respect Papon was one of the FLN's most effective recruiters.

6

Counting the Victims and Identifying the Killers

This chapter is divided into two parts: the first is a review of the ongoing debate and evidence in relation to the number of Algerians killed by security forces, the second explores the issue of which units or groups of officers were responsible for the massacre.

HOW MANY VICTIMS WERE THERE?

The most keenly debated question, indeed *the* central issue, in the highly politicized controversy that has raged for over twenty years on the events of October 17, relates to the precise number of Algerians who were killed at the hands of the police. Although numerous historians and commentators have debated this issue, including the official Mandelkern Report (1998) and the Géronimi Report (1999), the two key opponents in the 'numbers battle' are Jean-Luc Einaudi and Jean-Paul Brunet.[1] Einaudi can be described as a 'maximalist' in the sense that he has included in his most recent list of 325 dead and disappeared those he describes as 'very likely' victims of police violence, almost every possible instance of violent death recorded during the *two months* of September and October, including cases where there is little evidence of police involvement.[2] Brunet, a Professor of History, gained privileged access in May 1998 to the Archives of the Prefecture of Police and used these key sources to attack Einaudi, who was denied access to the documents, and to establish a 'minimalist' number of 30 to 50 deaths. Brunet's conservative approach has relied almost solely on official data, and in particular police sources—documentation which was profoundly corrupted in its very constitution—and he has cast doubt on all but the small number of instances in

[1] For an excellent short overview of the 'numbers debate' see Paul Thibaud, 'Le 17 octobre 1961: Un moment de notre histoire', *Esprit*, 279 (Nov. 2001), 6–19.

[2] Einaudi, *Octobre 1961*, 347–56. Einaudi's list includes numerous unidentified bodies recovered from the Seine or canals in which the perpetrator/s are unknown; some Algerians who appear to have died from suicide and accidents (e.g. Meghetti, Ouazar, Bouzzerar); while at least eight victims are listed twice because of variant orthography (e.g. Seddik Kenniche, listed also as Sedik Kheniche). Brunet, *Charonne*, 27, notes that Mohamed Larbi Boulahia, listed as a victim, was a *harki*.

which evidence of police complicity is very strong or irrefutable. Brunet also generates a minimal number by counting only those deaths that resulted from repression during the events of 17–20 October, and thus excludes the greater number of police killings that took place during September and early October.[3]

The Brunet–Einaudi dispute and their use of evidence highlights a number of key issues. First, many commentators have sown confusion by failing to state clearly whether the statistics of deaths which they deploy relate strictly to the night of 17 October, to the events of 17–20 October, or to some longer time-scale either preceding or following the demonstrations. Quite characteristic of media distortion is that of *Le Monde* summarizing Einaudi's *La Bataille de Paris* as demonstrating that the police 'killed over 200 on that evening [17 October]'.[4] To some extent Einaudi's work lends itself to such a misinterpretation and Brunet has attacked it by noting that in the list of 246 victims for whom a precise date of death is known, 57.3 per cent occurred before 17 October, so that in reality repression on 17–18 October led to 'a minority of Algerian deaths'.[5] Brunet goes to the very opposite extreme of excluding from his own estimates all those police killings that occurred immediately before the 17 October. Another researcher, Pierre Brichard, has followed a similar logic to Einaudi by ascribing to the police all 109 Algerian deaths registered in the files of the Service des successions musulmanes during the autumn of 1961, in most instances without any evidence, and lists some 27 of these as victims of the night of 17 October when many of these individuals died at a later date and have no proven connection to the events.[6]

Historical enquiry and debate surrounding the events of 1961 would be greatly advanced if closer attention was paid to a clearly stated time-scale for any quantification and also the nature of the problematic being addressed. It is our argument (see Chapter 3) that the crisis of 1961 can be most usefully interpreted as a two-month-long cycle of state violence that culminated in a more 'visible' peak of brutality on the night of 17 October. In the following discussion of the number of Algerian deaths and the pattern of repression, the data refer to a quite specific period of time from 1 September to 31 October inclusive.

Secondly, and more crucially, the total body of evidence relating to Algerian deaths in 1961 is scattered through a vast mass of complex archival and oral sources, much of which is still being opened to investigators. The main sources used to date can be listed as follows:

- The Institut médico-légal (IML), where most corpses found in rivers, canals, or open spaces of the city of Paris and Department of the Seine were taken for registration and autopsy.[7]

[3] Brunet, *Police contre FLN*, ch. 13, 'Bilan de la "bataille de Paris" ', 315–31. Brunet has replied to his many critics in *Charonne*, 17–74.

[4] *Le Monde* (6 Feb. 1999).

[5] Brunet, *Charonne*, 23–4.

[6] Pierre Brichard, 'L'Action sociale envers l'immigration algérienne, 1958–1961: Aux origines du Fonds d'action sociale', mémoire de maîtrise (Université de Paris-VIII, 1999), appendix 'Liste nominative'.

[7] Brunet, *Police contre FLN*, 135–39; *Charonne*, 67.

- The Archives of the Parquets of Paris, Versailles, and Pontoise relating to legal investigation of homicides in the city or of corpses carried down-river by the Seine.[8]
- The Archives of the Prefecture of Police.
- The Archives of the FLN, including internal reports by cadres on the events of 17 October, in the possession of Ali Haroun.
- Hospital registers located in the Archives de l'Assistance publique and elsewhere.
- Burial registers: the main source used to date relates to the cemetery at Thiais.[9]
- The Service des successions musulmanes. Pierre Brichard has identified 109 cases of homicide before and after 17 October.[10]
- Eyewitness and oral history sources, much of which is still being recorded.

A critical, cross-correlation of evidence from all such sources has been attempted by Einaudi, Brunet, Amiri, Brichard, and others to try and identify each individual instance of Algerian death, but so vast and complex are the data that relate to each instance, fragmentary and scattered through deposits that are still being catalogued, that it would require a team of researchers many years work and a computerized data base in order to be systematic and complete.

However, even if it was possible to invest in such a massive inquiry, it would not succeed in establishing a conclusive figure for the number of Algerian deaths at the hands of the police. First, as has already been seen, police, medical, and juridical documentation relating to individual cases was so constituted as to disguise police involvement. Using official records it is still possible to detect how this process of concealment operated, as in the following examples.

Brahim Kara, a well-known FLN militant who lived in the *bidonvilles* of Nanterre, was brought to hospital on 18 October and, before he died, tried to conceal his participation in the demonstration of 17 October by saying that he had been hit by a car. The investigating police officer did not believe the story and the autopsy report confirmed 'death consequent on cranial and abdominal trauma—homicide'. District commander Pierre Mézière in his report to the Public Prosecutor of the Seine admitted that Kara was not a victim of a road accident but probably of police violence, and then added a standard comment attached to almost every police report, 'perhaps also a victim of his coreligionists when he refused to take part in the demonstration', a ludicrous suggestion given the thick dossier on Kara's FLN activities as a militant and fund collector.[11] The case was then filed away by the court (*classé sans suite*) and remained officially registered as a death by road accident.[12]

[8] The key source on these deposits is the Géronimi Report.

[9] Einaudi, *La Bataille de Paris*, 11–14, found 197 North Africans were buried between Sept. and Dec. 1961

[10] Brichard, 'L'Action sociale'.

[11] APP-H1B35, Dossier on Brahim Kara.

[12] Géronimi Report, annex 1, 41. The Service des successions musulmanes was unhappy with the Prefecture explanation of death by a car accident: see Brichard, 'L'Action sociale', 81.

Mohamed Makhnane died in the hospital of Kremlin-Bicêtre on 23 October from severe blows to the stomach received in the Parc des Expositions. The Bicêtre doctor, concerned by the nature of his injuries, refused to sign his death certificate. A police investigation on 27 October found no record of Makhnane being held in the Parc; yet a SCAA report of 27 December confirmed his arrest and detention there on 18 October.[13] Although Makhnane almost certainly died from police violence, the autopsy report by police coroners in the IML concluded: 'no signs of violence. It would appear that one should look in the direction of death by natural causes.'[14] No judicial investigation was undertaken and the case does not appear among the 246 dossiers located by Géronimi in the judicial archives, since all files relating to 1961 which were closed *sans suite* were destroyed.[15]

Such cases undoubtedly represent the tip of the iceberg, a well-concealed mass of police killings that will never be definitively traced. Any attempt to rely solely on official data, as does Brunet, is bound to fall into the trap of constructing statistics from sources that are profoundly tainted. In this sense Einaudi is in part absolved in his less rigorous use of sources: many cases that he ascribes, without firm evidence, to police violence most probably were.

A further complicating factor arises from the fact that official registers or data did not record all deaths or instances of disappearance, and an untold number of Algerians left no trace in government archives. Algerians, even when severely wounded, desperately attempted to avoid going to hospital and with good reason: the Prefecture of Police instructed hospital administrators after 17 October to inform the police of any wounded Algerians and to prevent their discharge and injured men were even transferred by the police directly from hospitals to detention centres. Numerous dead or fatally wounded Algerians were removed from the streets by fellow Algerians, or managed to drag themselves away. Dr Morin of Saint-Denis, for example, treated injured men and witnessed instances where one 'had been strangled with a quite thin cord' and another 'was killed on coming out from a Métro station by police who shot him. His body showed numerous wounds.'[16] Some of these victims who do not appear in official registers may have been buried in the Cemetery of Thiais, in the Muslim burial ground at Bobigny, or repatriated to Algeria. Algerians were keen to wrest control of the bodies of loved ones from the much feared and detested French authorities, and ensure burial with full nationalist honours and following Islamic ritual.[17] The journalist Camille Gilles during a nocturnal visit to a shanty town in Nanterre was taken by an FLN cadre to a hut, '[who] showed me, underneath a blanket, the

[13] Einaudi, *Octobre 1961*, 262–3.

[14] APP-HIB35, dossier on Mohamed Makhnane.

[15] Géronimi Report, 5, 19.

[16] APP-H1B16, transcript of evidence given by Dr Morin, 14 Nov. 1961, during the trial of six FLN lawyers.

[17] Moroccan nationalists secretly buried thirty-one bodies after the 1944 uprising in Fez and, again, after the Casablanca massacre of Dec. 1947, burial took place at night in the shanty towns: Alison Baker, *Voices of Resistance*, 27, 71, 311–12.

nude corpse of a North African who had been killed by several bullets to the body. "You see", Amar said to me, "we took our dead as well as our wounded with us. They will be buried with all the honours they deserve.'[18] It is possible that some clandestine burials took place within the *bidonvilles*.[19]

A further problem with the official archival sources is that a considerable number of bodies, particularly those thrown into the Seine, may never have been recovered. Police assassination of Algerians on the banks of the Seine was virtually a routine practice, a convenient way of dumping a body and destroying forensic evidence. Einaudi and Émile Portzer claim that many dozens of Algerians killed in the courtyard of the Prefecture of Police, or some hundred corpses conveyed to the autopsy unit (IML) located next to the Seine, were dumped in the river.[20] Brunet has challenged this by noting that such a mass of bodies could not have passed undetected, and would have eventually been found down-river by lock-keepers at the weir of Suresnes. Brunet is probably right here, but his restricted focus on only those deaths that ensued as a consequence of demonstrations and repression in the *centre* of Paris on 17 October, obscures the fact that a far larger number of killings took place throughout September–October, as well as during the demonstrations, from bridges and isolated spots in the western suburbs down-river from Suresnes. Brunet attempts to undermine the evidence of the police officer Paul Rousseau, who witnessed Algerians being shot and tipped into the Seine from the Pont de Clichy or Neuilly, by claiming that the bodies would have been carried by currents down to the Suresnes lock, transferred to the IML, and subjected to judicial investigation,[21] whereas the Suresnes barrier is *up-river* from both the Pont de Clichy and Neuilly. It thus remains entirely possible that an untold number of bodies was carried down-river towards Rouen and was never recovered.

Other factors need to be considered in relation to numerous Algerians reported 'disappeared', and possibly liquidated, during the October events.[22] Some have entertained the possibility that the police disposed of numerous corpses in mass graves or in other ways. No evidence has ever been found to substantiate such claims.[23] An argument of more substance is that 'disappearances' were effected through the massive refoulement of some 1,781 FLN militants and others to Algeria in the weeks following 17 October.[24] According to the police and government these men were returned to 'their home village', but in reality many were placed in military camps where they could have been subjected to interrogation,

[18] *Paris Presse* (20 Oct. 1961). Hervo, *Chroniques*, 224, notes that some corpses at the Nanterre morgue were not declared to the official registry (*état civil*).

[19] Interview (J.H.) with Monique Hervo, 25 June 2003.

[20] Einaudi, *Octobre 1961*, 205–6, 300–1

[21] Brunet, *Police contre FLN*, 188, 191; Einaudi, *Octobre 1961*, 38.

[22] APP-HA110, contains several dossiers of disappeared persons, many of whom were subsequently located after release from detention centres or as transferred to Algeria.

[23] The report in *L'Humanité-hebdo* (6 Feb. 1999) of a mass grave found at Créteil linked to 17 Oct. was quickly shelved.

[24] Mandelkern Report, 9.

torture, and summary execution (*corvée de bois*).[25] In some instances particularly dangerous FLN militants were flown from Paris to Algiers where they were interrogated by a special army unit, the 123rd Brigade, which then provided secret intelligence reports to the Prefecture de Police.[26] At present it is not possible to say how many of these men may have been liquidated.

In 1961 the Communist deputy Jacques Duclos, and Einaudi more recently, noted a gap in the official statistics between the total number of men arrested after 17 October and the number released, detained, or returned to Algeria, and raised the question if this corresponded to men who had 'disappeared'.[27] Both were influenced by a notorious 1957 case when Paul Teitgen, General Secretary of the Algiers Prefecture, resigned when he found a 'black hole' of 3,024 men who had disappeared from the statistics of Algerians registered as under 'house arrest' (*assignation à résidence*), men probably killed by the military during the Battle of Algiers.[28] Einaudi has claimed that a similar bureaucratic procedure for concealing deaths operated in Paris and that 210 detainees recorded as transferred to Algeria had probably been killed in France.[29] Amar Moussaoui, hospitalized after the 17 October with head injuries from which he later died on 31 December 1961, was listed by Papon as among thirty-five men transferred to Algeria on 19 October.[30] However, the statistics of the Algerians held at Vincennes during October and November 1961 show the data to be so unreliable, often including figures rounded up to the nearest hundred, that statistical anomalies are to be expected.[31]

One final reason for the failure of families or relatives to identify the dead or to initiate judicial investigation was that most were poor and illiterate peasants and workers located in Algeria who simply did not know when sons or husbands had 'disappeared'. For example, FLN militants, looking to find news on Achour Meziane* who had disappeared after his arrest on 17 October, noted, 'we have searched to find a member of his family or close relative but have not found any known address'.[32] Even when families in Algeria did hear by letter or word-of-mouth, they were usually ill-equipped to find out from a distance what had happened or to penetrate the dense smokescreens thrown up by the authorities. In one of the rare instances in which a police cover-up was seriously challenged, it was because the family of Amar Mallek was relatively well-off, educated, living in Paris, and able to employ lawyers.

If there is one thing that we can be certain of in relation to the Paris massacre, it is that a conclusive or definitive figure as to the number of Algerian deaths

[25] The Commission de sauvegarde reported in Jan. 1962 that 4,070 men expelled from France were still in Algerian camps, with 211 leaders in the special harsh centres of Douera and Arcole: see Faivre, *Conflits d'autorités*, 135.

[26] APP-H1B18, *OS—Réseau de soutien logistique européen (1961–1962)*.

[27] *JODP* (Senate), 31 Oct. 1961, 1339, Jacques Duclos calculated, '500 people are missing. Where are they now?' Einaudi, *La Bataille de Paris*, 267–8.

[28] Branche, *La Torture*, 144.

[29] Einaudi, *La Bataille de Paris*, 267–8.

[30] Einaudi, *Octobre 1961*, 219–20.

[31] Brunet, *Police contre FLN*, 281–90.

[32] APP-H1B19, internal FLN report, Versailles, 29 Oct. 1961.

Table 3. Comparative figures of North African deaths by violence, Paris 1961

	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
Parquets	12	14	11	12	16	11	3	7	37	105	15	3
IML	19	16	20	28	25	20	8	12	48	93	11	8
Einaudi									72	106		

will never be arrived at. But this does not open the door to relativism or the position that mass killings never occurred. Even if the minimal estimate of Brunet and the Géronimi Report is accepted, that 'only' some fifty Algerians were murdered by the police, this would still constitute a massacre, as the court recognized in 1999 during the libel action brought by Papon against Einaudi.[33] However, there is a simple and convincing way to estimate the scale of police killings without having to indulge in an elaborate forensic investigation of every individual homicide as Brunet suggests. Table 3 gives the monthly figures for violent deaths of Algerians during 1961 registered by the Parquets of Paris, Versailles, and Pontoise,[34] by the Paris morgue (IML);[35] and by Einaudi for September and October alone.[36]

The figures for the Parquet, excluding the exceptional figures for September and October, show a monthly average of 10.4 deaths. If this average is subtracted from the September and October total of 142, there is an unusual 'excess' of 121 deaths (see Figure 2). If a similar calculation is made for the IML data, where the monthly average (excluding September and October) is higher at 16.7, the estimate of 'excess' deaths is slightly lower, at 108.

There is no archival or other evidence of any factors, apart from police actions, that could account for this enormous increase in homicides. There was no murderous and fratricidal wave of killings internal to the Algerian community, either by the FLN against its own militants, or between the FLN and the MNA. As has been noted, senior government officials, SCINA officers, and the judiciary were quite aware in the weeks before 17 October that this acceleration in killings was the work of the police. The figure of 108 to 121 deaths is almost uniquely a reflection of police violence. The official statistics used here *exclude* the large numbers of deaths which never reached the morgue and went unrecorded. It can be concluded that *during September and October* well over 120 Algerians were murdered by the police in the Paris region, a figure that compares quite closely to the estimates by Linda Amiri in particular (about 130),[37] the FLN (200), and Einaudi (200), but which have been widely and misleadingly attributed to the single night of 17 October.

[33] *Le Monde* (15 Feb. 1999).
[34] Géronimi Report, 19.
[35] Brunet, *Police contre FLN*, 138.
[36] Einaudi, *Octobre 1961*, table, 349–56.
[37] Linda Amiri, 'La Répression policière en France vue par les archives', in Harbi and Stora, *La Guerre d'Algérie*, 415.

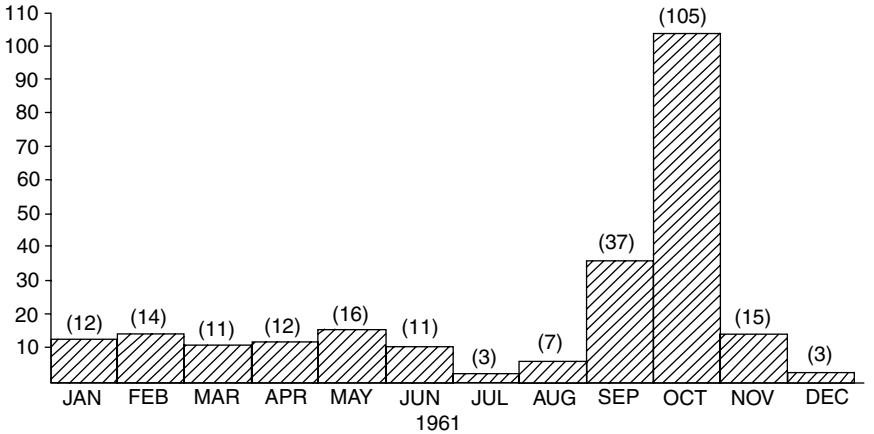


Figure 2. Monthly figures of North African deaths by violence, Paris 1961 (Parquets figures: Géronimi Report, 19)

WHO CARRIED OUT THE KILLINGS? RACISM AND 'PARALLEL' POLICE OPERATIONS

The total security forces available to Papon for the policing of Algerians in Paris, made up of 29,000 personnel within the Prefecture of Police, plus additional forces from the national agencies (*Sûreté nationale*) was both large, complex in structure, and internally differentiated (*gardiens de la paix*, BAV, CRS, FPA, *gardes mobiles*, etc.).[38] There was also considerable differentiation by politics and trade union affiliation, from a minority of extreme right-wing or OAS activists, through to left-socialist and Communist affiliated officers. The attitude of the force towards Algerians was thus far from homogeneous and while some elements relished the opportunity for violence others were deeply opposed to, and often traumatized by, killings.

For purposes of analysis two kinds of violence can be identified, although in reality they were interlinked. First, there existed a generalized and often racist antipathy towards Algerians that translated into a readiness to inflict ritual humiliation and varying levels of physical violence at any opportunity, violence that could tip over into fatal 'mistakes' (*bavures*) as during the tense atmosphere of demonstrations (the skull smashed too hard, the light finger on the gun trigger). Second, there was the murderous violence that was deliberately planned and executed by extreme right-wing officers who operated either within specialized anti-terrorist units or in 'unofficial' parallel commandos. These two forms are considered in turn.

[38] *Témoignages et documents*, 34 (Jan. 1962), 2, 'Les Effectifs de la police'.

As has been noted in earlier chapters, there existed a long history, indeed almost a tradition of anti-Algerian racism in the Paris police force stretching back to the inter-war period (the Brigades nord-africaines) and the Baylot era of the early 1950s, but this hostility deepened during the course of the Algerian War. By 1961 there existed a 'geography of violence' in Paris, whereby police stationed in particular districts or commissariats, usually close to the main Algerian enclaves, gained a reputation for entrenched and quotidian racist abuse and brutality. Typical in this respect were the stations of Vigie-Fleury, Grandes-Carrières, Saint-Denis, Aubervilliers, Puteaux, and La Villette in which young officers were introduced to a cult of brutality and canteen racism that they could not oppose without personal risk and which was condoned by some commanders. Hatred assumed a particularly virulent form during the period from late August 1961 onwards as assassinations of officers accelerated and the Prefecture encouraged a climate of punitive violence.

After 17 October some commentators developed a distinction between a legitimate violence 'à chaud', a situation in which officers who were understandably angry and tense at the death of colleagues got carried away during the heat of confrontation with Algerian demonstrators; and a calculated, sadistic violence 'à froid' inflicted within police stations and detention centres. The distinction is, however, misleading: during the demonstration of 17 October violence did not derive, as Brunet argues, from a scenario in which ill-prepared and outnumbered police forces lashed out in fear and desperation, but rather from a *predisposition*, a long-ingrained habituation to racist brutality. The rank and file eagerly anticipated venting their rage on Algerians even before they made contact and also in the secure knowledge that they would be protected by their superiors.

A more controversial issue is the extent to which the police service was penetrated by extreme right-wing or pro-OAS elements that were operating to a more political agenda. This is a complex matter, especially since it has proved difficult to penetrate the murky world of clandestine French 'ultras' and death squads, but a significant body of evidence confirms the existence of such networks. As has been noted in Chapter 3, there are many dozens of instances in which police squads, usually operating at night, took Algerians to isolated locations, trussed, shot, or strangled victims, and frequently dumped them into rivers or canals. The operation of the so-called 'welcome committees' at police stations and detention centres, during which lethal violence was deployed, was done under the eye of senior officers. On the night of 17 October false information was disseminated through the police radio networks that officers had been killed by FLN gunmen at various locations. These rumours, which would have been picked up by the central command room in the Prefecture, were never countermanded by the Papon HQ and served to generate a climate of insecurity and revenge in the police force.[39] Who were these shadowy forces?

[39] Einaudi, *La Bataille de Paris*, 123, 136, 146, 150, 176, 178.

One important source of information comes from the minutes and oral testimony of leaders within the main police union the SGP, men who as insiders to the daily workings of the Prefecture were in a good position to know if ultra commandos or pro-OAS elements were operating within the force. SGP delegates warned repeatedly of the formation of commandos intent on imposing their 'own justice'.[40] An intense debate within the SGP throughout September to December 1961 centred on the growing fear that proto-fascist elements, particularly among senior officers, were deliberately encouraging the rank and file under their command to engage in illegal violence towards Algerians and generating a dangerous 'intoxication' of the whole force.[41] The intense anxiety among SGP leaders of a slide towards fascism, of which the extreme violence of 17 October was taken as a clear sign, can be understood within the context of a long and bitter political conflict that festered within the Paris police throughout the decade 1951–61.

During 1951 to 1954 Jean Baylot, the virulent anti-Communist and right-wing Prefect of Police, had supported the commissioner Jean Dides in his attempt to establish a neo-fascist network within the Paris force and also engineered the removal in 1952 of twenty-one left-wing officers.[42] Although the expelled men eventually won a legal appeal in March 1960 for reinstatement or compensation, Frey and Papon refused to implement the decision of the court, and one of the victims, Émile Portzer, later wrote the dramatic exposé of violence on 17 October, the anonymous tract *Un groupe de policiers républicains déclare*.[43] Baylot had also reinstated a large number of collaborationist officers who had been purged at the Liberation and undermined the main police trade union, the SGP, which prided itself on its Resistance traditions, by encouraging the creation of a number of unions that grouped higher ranking officers with extreme right-wing sympathies (the Syndicat indépendant de la police municipale, the Syndicat général des cadres, and the Amicale des commissaires).[44] In July 1954 the Mendès France government removed Baylot and Dides, but the 'ultra' networks within the police survived within the minority unions and eventually found a new breathing space under Papon after March 1958. Papon was not averse to promoting former collaborationists: for example, René Descamps*, who was purged from the force in March 1945 and reinstated by Baylot in 1952–3, was promoted by Papon to a key post in the SCAA as head of the anti-FLN intervention unit, the 8th Brigade Territoriale, and was recommended in 1959 for the Légion d'Honneur.[45]

After the attempted military putsch of April 1961, during which Salan threatened to fly parachute regiments into Paris and the SGP formed a Comité de

[40] Archives SGP-FO, Minutes CA, 15 Sept. 1961. APP-H1B32, an anonymous letter in Apr. 1961 warned the Commissaire Jean Vallois that, if firm measures were not taken to halt FLN attacks on *harkis* and police, 'a group of policemen in civilian clothing will undertake major reprisals against the FMA [French Algerian Muslims]'.

[41] Archives SGP-FO, Minutes CAE, 13 Nov. 1961.

[42] Archives SGP-FO, Minutes Congrès fédéral, 1961.

[43] Einaudi, *Octobre 1961*, 300–1.

[44] *L'Express* (28 Dec. 1961).

[45] APP-HA88, SCAA file Personnel/effectifs (1958–62).

vigilance, union leaders accused Papon and his senior officers of playing a waiting game and failing to take action to defend the capital for four days.[46] After the putsch the government took steps to purge police officers who had showed signs of support for the generals' revolt and a special fund was created on 8 June 1961 to pension them off.[47] The SGP complained bitterly that this fund was not used by Papon to retire 'ultra' activists but misused to get rid of incompetent, ill, and alcoholic officers.[48] As the cycle of police violence against Algerians deepened through September and October the SGP leadership became increasingly concerned that this climate was being deliberately nurtured by 'ultra' senior officers for political reasons: as one delegate claimed on 13 November, 'We are currently paying for and undergoing the consequences of the policy undertaken by M. Baylot.'[49]

Through November and December 1961 this anxiety—in line with the French left in general—shifted away from the specific violence of 17 October to a concern that the Republic was endangered by a slide towards fascism. The SGP thought that Papon and other senior figures in the Prefecture were taking no effective measures to combat the OAS, and that this was in keeping with their extreme right sympathies. With hindsight we know that the danger of a fascist coup or a slide into an authoritarian police state was not to materialize, and the SGP fears in relation to the police hierarchy may appear exaggerated, but in the highly unstable and unpredictable context of late 1961, as OAS bombings increased and the final stages of the war threatened to slide into an anarchic bloodbath, the fears were not totally unfounded.[50] What evidence is there that the extremism of senior police officers translated into, or provided a framework of operations for, the activity of illegal death squads?

When Papon created the SCAA in late 1958 as the key organization in the battle against the FLN in Paris, he placed under its command a number of specialized rapid intervention units whose task it was to patrol the Algerian quarters, to respond quickly to FLN attacks, and to arrest terrorist suspects. In addition to two existing units, the BAV and 8th Brigade territoriale, which were attached to the new SCAA, Papon created the *harki* brigade as well as the compagnies d'intervention and the *équipes spéciales*. The last two formations were to play a prominent role in the extreme violence of September–October 1961.

The commanders (*commissaires contrôleurs généraux*) of the six police districts into which Paris was divided had at their disposal two compagnies d'intervention (also known as 'sections spéciales'), each unit made up of 125 or 135 men.[51] The compagnies, similar in kind to the CRS, were essentially riot squads held on

[46] Archives SGP-FO, Minutes Congrès fédéral, 1961; General Feuvrier, in charge of internal military security in Paris, was critical of Papon, see Maurice Faivre, 'Le Renseignement dans la guerre d'Algérie', in Jauffret, *Militaires et guérilla*, 309 n. 54.

[47] Peyroulou, 'Rétablir et maintenir', 126. A total of 1,100 police were removed from the Algerian and metropolitan police.

[48] Archives SGP-FO, Minutes CA, 15 Sept. 1961.

[49] Archives SGP-FO, Minutes CAE, 13 Nov. 1961.

[50] Peyroulou, 'Rétablir et maintenir', 127.

[51] *Témoignages et documents*, 34 (Jan. 1962), 2; Brunet, *Charonne*, 129–30.

standby to intervene quickly and, inevitably, their main function was to carry out street operations against Algerians. The units were made up of young, physically tough volunteers who enjoyed 'combat duty', and by 1961 the backbone was provided by ex-paratroopers, 'a lumpen class, often veterans of Indochina and Korea'.[52] Raoul Letard, who operated with a company in the third district during 1960–1, has described the ambience of the unit as 'extremely energetic, muscular and particularly restless', and engaged in constant operations 'of extreme violence'.[53] The compagnies became hot-beds of 'ultra' activism and of a cult of anti-Algerian violence, and commanders called on these units, armed with riot sticks (*bidules*), whenever they wished to 'teach a lesson' to demonstrators, as on 17 October, the 19 December 1961, and at Charonne on 8 February 1962.[54] Portzer claimed in his tract *Un groupe de policiers* that illegal commandos were formed at Saint-Denis, Aubervilliers, and elsewhere from members of the companies d'intervention and 'off-duty municipal police in civilian dress "working on their own account" '.[55]

It seems likely that officers of compagnies d'intervention, located in police stations in which a culture of violence was entrenched, did take a leading role in inflicting lethal force on Algerians, but another type of unit, the special squads (*équipes spéciales*), were probably behind the small mobile teams that seized Algerians at night, bundled them into unmarked radio-cars, and murdered them in isolated locations. The special squads consisted of nineteen plain-clothes teams (a brigadier and five *gardiens de la paix*), and eighteen mixed uniform and plain-clothes units. These small teams, which cruised around the Algerian sectors in radio-cars twenty-four hours a day, were composed of specially trained 'anti-terrorist' officers, often conversant in Arabic or Berber.[56] On 5 September 1961 Papon ordered the SCAA to undertake special repressive actions as a riposte to the FLN assassination of police officers: 'and, in the front line, the Special squads in plain clothes or uniform', which should be backed if necessary by extra forces. Papon continued, 'Members of [FLN] commandos caught red-handed in criminal activities should be killed on the spot.'[57] The Director of SCAA, in a later report on his implementation of Papon's instructions, noted how the special squads had intensified operations to arrest Algerians by 'working outside the normal rules of procedure', which appears to be a coded reference to actions carried out in the absence of the Police judiciaire so that there was no legal restraint on police violence.[58]

Brunet confirms that 'parapoliciers' groups existed but argues that these could only have been off-duty bands operating outside the hours of service, on the

[52] Evidence of Brigadier G. in *Témoignages et documents*, 34 (Jan. 1962), 2.
[53] Archives IHESI, Raoul Letard interview, 11 May 1993, transcript, pp. 8–10.
[54] Brigadier G. in *Témoignages et documents*, 34 (Jan. 1962), 2.
[55] Tract, *Un groupe de policiers républicains déclare*, 2.
[56] APP-HA65, Papon Report to SCINA, Ministry of the Interior, 17 June 1960.
[57] APP-HA110, Papon order to Director of SCAA and Police Municipale, 5 Sept. 1961.
[58] APP-HA68, Director of SCAA to Papon, 4 Oct. 1961.

specious grounds that tight hierarchical controls and accountability would not have allowed such freelance actions. The emphasis on 'off-duty' commando actions[59] partially absolves the Prefecture of responsibility for killings and after Charonne Papon and Frey were happy to ascribe lethal violence to extremist networks operating outside or against their lines of command. However, numerous Algerian reports on death squad units indicate the presence of uniformed police officers and of unmarked cars operating by radio contact. Brunet records the sadistic torture practices of a brigadier in Colombes who enjoyed arresting Algerians near the shanty towns, taking them by car to an isolated spot in Gennevilliers, and subjecting them to simulated execution—a practice that seemed perfectly possible within the constraints of normal hours of service and hierarchical control.[60] It seems likely that members of the police force were involved in the murder of Algerians while on active duty, but as has so frequently been the case in the history of 'death squads', there is little recorded evidence of a direct link to high level commanders, even where there was a certain complicity or sanctioning by the state, the main consideration being, as Sluka notes, that squads, 'are distinct enough from the official chain of command for governments to maintain a "plausible denial" of involvement'.[61]

For obvious reasons police involved in killing squads left little evidence of their activities, but in a least one incident the archives detail how a unit incited the killing of an FLN cadre. On the 11 October 1961 a special squad arrested an FLN militant Mohammed Hadj* and took him to the Saint-Denis police station. At a time when tension was high as a consequence of FLN assassinations, the squad circulated a note within the station claiming that Hadj had made death threats against certain officers and this incited some men to remove the Algerian to an isolated cell where he was beaten savagely for several hours. When Hadj was taken at about 2.30 a.m. to the station of Grandes Carrières for transfer to Vincennes (CIV) he was in such a terrible condition that the duty officer refused to sign him in. The police returned Hadj to his lodging and told the hotel owner he had not wanted to be taken to hospital, although the real reason was that his arrest had been carried out illegally. Hadj died in his room the same morning before a doctor could get him to hospital.[62] This case, although not one of 'liquidation' in an isolated location, is still revealing of how special squads were involved in illegal night-time operations without the presence of the Police judiciaire and were prepared to incite violence that led to an Algerian being beaten to death.[63]

There is also evidence that 'ultra' police with access to intelligence files on the identity and address of FLN militants passed information on to colleagues in

[59] Brunet, *Charonne*, 51.

[60] Ibid. 51; on the use of identical methods by FPA officers, see APP-H1B30, evidence of Younès Bekhat* arrested 24 Jan. 1961.

[61] Sluka, *Death Squads*, 5.

[62] APP-H1B16, *Enquête sur un réseau FLN* (1961); Einaudi, *Octobre 1961*, 147–52.

[63] For a similar incident of an Algerian being beaten to death in a cell at the station of Vigie-Fleury on 13 Sept. 1961 see APP-H1B35; Einaudi, *Octobre 1961*, 86.

special intervention units. For example, in one instance four Algerians released from the CIV at 9.30 p.m. against whom there could have been insufficient evidence to justify detention or prosecution were immediately intercepted by a waiting car and taken to a wood where three of them were beaten to death.[64]

The special squads played a major role during 17 October by 'taking out' small groups of Algerians separated from the main demonstrations which, according to District Commander Gaveau, 'they located, dispersed and annihilated, often in a radical manner'.[65] Gaveau also noted the important radio-car liaison of the special squads with other police units on 17 October and they may well have been the source of the false rumours transmitted by police radios that Algerians had shot and killed numerous officers.

The various intervention units commanded by the SCAA were also notorious hot-beds of racism and 'ultra' activism because many men were recruited among those of settler origin who had previous experience of police, native administration, and army service in North Africa, and who could often speak Arabic or Berber. During 1954–5 the government attempted to neutralize the political and putschist threat offered by the most notorious 'ultra' police officers in Morocco and Algeria by transferring them to metropolitan France and replacing them with loyal men from France who would serve to 'democratize' the colonial police.[66] On the independence of Morocco and Tunisia several hundred police officers were repatriated, and many of these had experience of ultra 'counter-terrorism'.[67] After June 1955 officers who were under investigation in Algeria for torture, including Costes, Carcenac, Touron, Havard, and Forcioli, instead of being disciplined were simply transferred to metropolitan France.[68] In March 1958 a Prefecture investigation noted that Mazzero*, who had been involved in the 'counter-terrorist' groups that murdered Lemaigre-Dubreuil in Morocco (see Chapter 1) was now active in the Paris police, recruiting 'his former colleagues from Tunisia and Morocco' into the fascist Front d'action nationale.[69] Only three weeks before 17 October CRS riot police of *pied-noir* origin who were favourable to the OAS were transferred from Algeria to France.[70] Algerians who were subjected to police violence by patrols or during demonstrations frequently

[64] *Vérité-Liberté*, 13 (Nov. 1961), 4.

[65] APP-HA110, report of Gaveau, Commander of District 3, to Papon, 5 Nov. 1961.

[66] APP-HA1, *Reclassement des fonctionnaires français en poste en Tunisie et au Maroc*, notes that by May 1957 some 364 officers had been transferred from Morocco to France and 151 to Algeria; see also Peyroulou, 'Rétablir et maintenir', 118–19.

[67] Ibid. 122.

[68] Patrick Kessel and Giovanni Pirelli, *Le Peuple algérien et la guerre: Lettres et témoignages 1954–1962* (Paris: Maspero, 1962; L'Harmattan repr., 2003), 11. Was this the same Havard that the FLN assassinated in Paris on 4 Sept. 1961?

[69] APP-HA89, *Manifestation du 13 mars 1958: Rapport de synthèse*. Another 'counter-terrorist' officer in Morocco, Robert Denard, was allowed back into the French police in the late 1950s: see Pierre Péan, *L'Homme de l'ombre: Éléments d'enquête autour de Jacques Foccart* (Paris: Fayard, 1990), 532–3.

[70] Maurice Faivre, 'Le Renseignement dans la guerre d'Algérie', in Jauffret, *Militaires et guérilla*, 302.

commented on the leading role played by officers whom they identified as of North African origin from regional nuances of *pied-noir* dialect and racist abuse.

In addition to this injection of 'hard-core' proto-fascist elements from North Africa into the Paris force, many police units, notably the CRS and *gendarmerie mobile*, undertook regular tours of duty in Algeria and as a result some of these men were 'infected' by the brutal forms of repression and violence that were endemic in the colony. By the end of 1960 each metropolitan gendarme company had spent at least five periods of six months in Algeria.[71] Every three months a group of fifty metropolitan officers went to the training school of the notorious DOP interrogation and torture teams.[72] A large and growing volume of police officers in Paris had also seen active service in parachute regiments in Korea, Indo-China, Morocco, and Algeria, and brought with them a virulent anti-Communist ideology and experience of the methods of colonial warfare.[73] Such 'colonials', many of them pro-OAS in sympathy or with extreme right-wing leanings, were concentrated in precisely those tough specialist units that engaged in repressive operations against the FLN.

In a press conference on 26 September 1961 Pierre Mendès France expressed a fear shared by many on the left when he warned of the dangers of civil war and the '"algerianisation" of the metropolis'.[74] But how far can the wave of killings of Algerians after September 1961 be attributed to OAS activists within the police force? Most studies of the OAS in metropolitan France centre on its campaign during 1961 to assassinate prominent individuals like de Gaulle and have tended to neglect the question of attacks on the mass of ordinary Algerians and FLN supporters.[75] However, as it became clear from September 1961 that de Gaulle was determined to concede Algerian independence, so 'ultra' elements in both Algeria and France abandoned any 'constructive' plans for a future *Algérie française* in favour of a bitter and savage revanchism in which a prime objective was to unleash punitive terror on all Algerians.

Through the second half of 1961 the OAS in Paris resorted increasingly to attacks on Algerian cafés using plastic explosive.[76] In early October the OAS, in response to the FLN attacks on the police, issued a tract which stated that it intended to reply 'to any new attack organised against the police by the destruction of a meeting place of the FLN or MNA'.[77] The OAS threat to the FLN in

[71] Jacques Frémeaux, 'La Gendarmerie et la guerre d'Algérie', in Jauffret, *Militaires et guérilla*, 76.

[72] Branche, *La Torture*, 201, 365.

[73] APP-H1B30, a report by Legay (Dec. 1961) notes 490 officers of the Prefecture had served in Indo-China.

[74] *Le Monde* (27 Sept. 1961).

[75] On the OAS see Alexander Harrison, *Challenging de Gaulle. The OAS and the Counter-Revolution in Algeria, 1954–1962* (New York: Praeger, 1989); Rémi Kauffer, *OAS: Histoire d'une guerre franco-française* (Paris: Seuil, 2002); Georges Fleury, *Histoire secrète de l'OAS* (Paris: Grasset, 2002).

[76] APP-HA56, SCINA, Synthèses quotidiennes, 1538, 5 Oct. 1961, reports attacks with plastic explosive on six North African hotels on a single day.

[77] *Le Monde* (7 Oct. 1961).

Paris became serious enough by October 1961 for the latter to begin collecting intelligence and preparing commando OS teams to attack the enemy.[78]

The most detailed information on the shadowy world of OAS activism and its links to covert operations against the FLN in Paris relates to the Service action (SA), a commando wing of the counter-espionage agency the SDECE, which carried out special operations, including assassinations. The headquarters of the SA was at Fort Noisy and one of its officers, Raymond Muelle, has provided an insider view of its activities and of the close operational links to the *harki* brigade commanded by his close friend Captain Montaner and located in the same barracks.[79] From 1960 until the end of the Algerian War the SA and FPA officers located at Noisy, although officially under quite separate commands, in reality cooperated informally on a day-to-day basis and shared views on how to wage 'unconventional' warfare against the FLN in Paris. At a higher level there may have been a very discreet cooperation or 'convergence' in operations between Papon, in control of the FPA, and Colonel Roussillat, commander of the SA.[80]

In principle the Service action was only permitted to carry out assassinations outside French territory and against foreign nationals, for example, arms dealers in Germany and Switzerland who were supplying the FLN, but under de Gaulle so-called 'homo' operations greatly increased in metropolitan France and targeted Algerians who were legally French citizens, including the top FLN defence lawyer in Paris, Ould Aoudia.[81] The bodies of some Algerians who were kidnapped, interrogated, and then murdered in Paris were set in concrete inside big oil drums and then dumped over the Mediterranean from airplanes en route for Algeria.[82] The orders for assassination came from a small committee in which the key members were the Prime Minister, his adviser Constantine Melnik, and Jacques Foccart as the representative of de Gaulle,[83] evidence that death squads were not merely tolerated but directed at the highest level of the state. While the Service action generally only targeted leading FLN figures and might appear to have had little to do with the random wave of killings of ordinary Algerian migrants in 1961, Melnik has noted an intensification of the activities of the 'secret killing machine'—it murdered 135 people in 1960 alone—as well as a process of seeking ever-wider targets and a slide into uncontrolled hoodlum (*barbouze*) actions.[84]

A high percentage of SDECE and SA officers, including Roussillat, the head of the Service action, sympathized with the OAS and provided it with assistance

[78] APP-H1B21, report on *pied-noir* 'collaborateurs' and 'tueurs'.

[79] Muelle, *7 Ans de guerre*; Muelle interviews (N.M.), Paris 8 and 10 Jan. 2003.

[80] Interview with Muelle, 8 Jan. 2003.

[81] Muelle, *7 Ans de guerre*, 141–6.

[82] Constantine Melnik, *La Mort était leur mission: Le Service Action pendant la guerre d'Algérie* (Paris: Plon, 1996), 164–5.

[83] *Le Monde* (27 Jan. 1996); Roger Faligot and Pascal Krop, *La Piscine: The French Secret Service since 1944* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1989), 105, 117, 157–64; Péan, *L'Homme de l'ombre*, 222–3.

[84] Melnik, *La Mort*, 7, 55, 128–9.

during 1961.[85] Fort Noisy provided a perfect milieu for the transmission of 'official' intelligence on FLN targets, as well as materials and commando expertise, to paramilitary squads that unleashed indiscriminate violence and a generalized terror against Algerians. SA officers at Noisy appear to have supplied plastic explosive from the SA base at Cercottes that was then used against Algerian café-hotels, including an attack on a café at Pont-sur-Seine in which eleven men died.[86] In July 1961 an OAS activist Jacques Mugica made contact with Montaner and Muelle at Fort Noisy and then, provided with intelligence on FLN centres of activity, engaged in grenade attacks on a number of Algerian cafés in the 18th arrondissement and the suburbs.[87]

A further part in the surge in anti-Algerian violence in Paris may have been played by the Gaullist Service d'action civique which constituted a shadowy network in the police force and recruited from the criminal underworld.[88] In December 1959 Papon had given permission for the Service to cooperate with the SAT in 'operations of psychological action',[89] but more significant than this was the highly secret 'Third Force' operation known as the Front algérien d'action démocratique (FAAD) which was initiated from the Fort Noisy base. By late 1960 Michel Debré was aware that a settlement to the war was inevitable but still believed that the FLN could be excluded from negotiations. Since the MNA was too weak to provide a viable alternative to the FLN Debré gave a top-secret directive to the SDECE to establish a new political movement, the FAAD, with which the French could then negotiate the creation of a 'democratic', anti-Communist Republic closely linked to French and *pied-noir* interests. The FAAD was first established and tested in Paris before being extended to Algeria, and a key role in recruiting cadres from among the MNA, 'turned' FLN, and various shady elements from among the criminal underclass, was played by Captain Géronimi, head of the 4th SAT district, and his adjutant, Lavanceau, working in cooperation with the SA unit at Noisy.[90]

By 1960 the FLN had, after an extremely bloody struggle, almost eliminated the MNA in the Paris region. This was not to the liking of the security services, who had been only too happy to see the nationalists locked into a murderous struggle, and through 1959–60 the police increasingly intervened to try and buttress the MNA or to arm 'self-defence' groups against the FLN.[91] Muelle

[85] Faligot and Krop, *La Piscine*, 171; Péan, *L'Homme de l'ombre*, 257–8; Douglas Porch, *The French Secret Services* (London: Macmillan, 1996).

[86] Muelle, *7 Ans de guerre*, 182, 248–9; interviews 8 and 10 Jan. 2003.

[87] Fleury, *Histoire secrète*, 374; Muelle interview, 10 Jan. 2003. In 1962 Muelle was sentenced to a two-year suspended prison sentence for OAS activities.

[88] Péan, *Jacques Foccart*, 331–69; Valat, 'Un tournant', 340.

[89] APP-HA60, *Concernant l'action psychologique à mener à Paris dans le milieu musulman*, 18 May 1960.

[90] Jean-Marie Lavanceau, unpubl. MS, Raymond Muelle archive; on the FAAD see M. Faivre, 'Services secrets et "Troisième Force" '; Muelle, *7 Ans de guerre*, 219–20, 240–5.

[91] *Le Monde* (14 Nov. 1959); Haroun, *La 7è Wilaya*, 260, 262, 267.

notes, 'For a while the police made use of them [MNA], supplying them with weapons, exchanging money for intelligence, and turning a blind eye to their networks.'[92] One danger of such a strategy was that the weapons could easily fall into the hands of the FLN. The creation of the FAAD, however, based in a villa in the eastern suburbs of Paris, provided a much more reliable counter-force that could be readily armed and manipulated by its French controllers. In November 1960 Papon was informed of the existence of FAAD so as to protect its agents in Paris from police arrest and during 1961 FAAD squads began to attack and assassinate FLN cadres.[93] Melnik claims that the commander of the *harki* submitted lists of individual GA or OS who he wished eliminated to the head of the Service action and every evening 'teams of parachutists went out into the Muslim suburbs to execute the gun-men of the rebellion', leaving FAAD tracts attached to each corpse as a 'visiting card'.[94] An anonymous officer involved with the FAAD in Paris later commented, 'Many of the corpses found floating down the currents of the Seine and Rhône, many of the assassinations that have remained a mystery and which nobody seeks any longer to elucidate—the settling of scores between Muslims' were actually the work of the FAAD.[95] The FLN in Paris was perfectly aware of the existence of the FAAD and by August 1961 was preparing an armed response.[96]

The standard response of Papon, Frey, and the French government to the growing number of bodies that were found in the Seine during September and October 1961 was that these were the victims of Algerian nationalist rivalry. But by this time the MNA in Paris was a spent force, and the acceleration of killings of Algerians can be in part ascribed to OAS 'plastiqueurs' and to a clandestine 'dirty tricks' operation that was armed and funded by the state. Although the OAS and the FAAD may have been responsible for a minority of the total killings carried out by the security services in September and October, the operations based at Fort Noisy are important for the light which they shed on the wider field of state violence and repression.

While de Gaulle, from his regal heights, looked down at what he called the 'vulgar and subaltern' world of police counter-terrorism, he was certainly prepared to delegate dirty operations to his close aides like Jacques Foccart. The Prime Minister was even more directly involved in assassinations by the Service action which were planned from his own Cabinet. The heads of government had no moral or political compunction against the use of illegal killings in the 'war on terrorism', rather their main concern was that such assassinations should never be traceable back to them and that 'deniability' should be maintained at all costs.[97] In order to blur or conceal the lines of communication, those units involved in state-sponsored killings had to be given a certain degree of autonomy and this

[92] Muelle, *7 Ans de guerre*, 291–2. [93] Ibid. 243. [94] Melnik, *La Mort*, 181–9.
[95] *Historia Magazine*, 345, suppl. (1973), 2–5, 'Le FAAD', 'Témoignage' of P.-A.L.
[96] APP-HA56, SCINA, Synthèses quotidiennes, 1498, 8 Aug. 1961.
[97] See Campbell, *Death Squads*, 3, on the issue of 'deniability'.

sometimes carried the risk of death squads escaping hierarchical lines of control and discipline and tipping over into vigilantism. The degree to which the government was prepared to engage in 'official' assassination and 'dirty war' tactics served to encourage the freelance or entrepreneurial activities of police officers who decided that they would take the bloody punishment of Algerians into their own hands. In this respect the fear of police trade union leaders in the SGP that a dangerous putrefaction (*pourrissement*) of the security forces was under way was not unfounded.

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II

REVISITING OCTOBER AND THE AFTERLIVES OF MEMORY

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Introduction to Part II

As Part I showed, the repression of 17 October 1961 represented the paroxysm of routinized state violence carried over and adapted into the metropolitan sphere. We also saw that Papon was relatively successful in working around the potential limits due legal process placed on repressive intervention and circumvented opposition within sectors of the state apparatus and among elected officials. This routinization of state violence also stemmed from the long-term absence of influential counter-balances within civil society. This absence is a key issue for the historian seeking to understand the reactions to anti-Algerian repression after 17 October, and the short and longer term impact of such reactions relating in particular to the memorial afterlives of the events.

The first chapters of Part II therefore re-examine the political landscape in France fractured by the Algerian War and the cold war. More specifically, we cannot interpret the complex position of the French left in relation to the events of 17 October unless we take into consideration the history and troubled relationship between the Communist and Socialist movements and Algerian nationalism. One key indicator of this was the reluctance of the Communist Party (PCF) to support the FLN and mobilize on the issue of 17 October, a reluctance we can only understand in relation to these long-standing political differences between official Communism and Algerian nationalism that the war itself had exacerbated. Part II, and Chapter 7 in particular, therefore returns to the chronological period examined in Part I, but from an entirely different perspective, that of the evolution of anti-war forces, trade unions, and parties of the left, so as to provide a complementary political context against which the drama of 17 October was played out.

In turn, understanding these tense relationships, dividing the left from the FLN, but also Communists and non-Communists, radical and moderate anti-colonial left, is vital to illuminate the way in which the dramatic events of October 1961 would then pass into near oblivion for decades in France. Linking the event and its various afterlives, Part II analyses the reactions after 17 October within this long-term historical context, before examining the history of the diverse memories of 17 October and how and why these slowly 'emerged' after 1980 from their marginal presence in France and Algeria.

REVISITING THE POLITICAL CONTEXT

The 'conventional' view regarding the reactions following 17 October is that these were woefully inadequate due to the failure of the PCF and main trade unions to mount any serious protest movement, and that this inadequacy explains the

covering up in the following months. This is one necessary reading of reactions to 17 October. However, such a reading is potentially partial and over-reductive, since following 17 October there were a greater number of protests than most previous studies have suggested. Although limited in their majority to defensive anti-fascist, anti-racist, or humanitarian registers, such protests challenged the official versions of what took place. Nevertheless, a variety of factors intervened to cut short any nascent social movement against repression: crucially, the French left, fearful of state and OAS violence and a possible slide into fascism, *displaced* the question of Algerian independence onto the more consensual ongoing question of anti-fascism, largely removing the specificity of the Algerians' struggle.[1] In addition, the GPRA, as we have seen, sought to remove the 17 October as a source of possible conflict with French negotiators. There was therefore a dual displacement of the events.

A further key contributory factor to understanding why the massacre was then buried relates to metropolitan French public opinion. Chapters 7 and 8 analyse the 'social construction of indifference'[2] that had greatly affected Parisians' attitudes towards Algerians, a *process* under way over decades. With hindsight, what both the causes of and reactions to 17 October reveal is the extent to which the Algerian War 'gangrened' not only sectors of the state but also wide sectors of metropolitan French society. Whilst the war may well have been one of 'committed minorities',[3] affecting certain groups especially (the *porteurs de valises*, OAS, conscript soldiers, anti-colonial intellectuals, etc.), the war's social effects were arguably more widespread and long-lasting. As Étienne Balibar has argued, we need to look to the dialectic linking state and civil society regarding the formation, expression, and reproduction of racist attitudes and practices.[4] This is particularly so in relation to the articulation of dehumanizing images of Algerians which made all the more 'sense' to the racist imaginary of many sectors of French society at the end of a lengthy and violent conflict.[5] The victims of state violence were unlikely to solicit much public sympathy: their social class and ethnic origin left them at the bottom of the sliding scale of moral outrage. Nevertheless, public opinion was polarized, as there were also a number of remarkable exceptions to these high levels of French public indifference or hostility. Once we take into account these factors, the reactions to 17 October become far more 'readable', and their scale and nature relatively predictable. The left reacted to the repression without considering it enough of a priority to warrant unified, mass street protests. Reactions after 17 October can therefore be usefully situated and understood within existing patterns of protest against repression, their inability to draw in wider support, and their subsequent incapacity to pressurize government.

[1] Patrice Mann, 'Les Manifestations dans la dynamique des conflits', in Pierre Favre (ed.) *La Manifestation* (Paris: Presses de la FNSP, 1990), 300. [2] Cohen, 'Silencing Objections'.
[3] John Talbott, 'French Public Opinion and the Algerian War', *French Historical Studies*, 9/2 (Fall 1975), 354–61, 361. [4] Balibar, *Les Frontières*, 85–6.
[5] David Macey, 'The Algerian with the Knife', *Parallax*, 7 (Apr.–June 1998), 159–68.

By situating state repression during the war in the longer term and analysing the peaks and troughs of repression in the light of the changes in the political, diplomatic, and military conjuncture, some recent studies help explain these very limited conditions of possibility for protest against state violence.[6] While not focusing on the campaigns against state terror, such studies have usefully revealed how and why the wider political process usually dictated the failure or the relative successes such protests achieved. Where academic studies have looked at 17 October, these have corrected earlier visions of the massacre as having had no media profile at the time[7] and have started to offer a reappraisal of the levels of protests (without making these issues a central concern).[8] Other historians and political scientists have highlighted the defensive and mostly anti-fascist nature of the mainstream French reactions to 17 October. However, usually these studies embrace responses to 17 October as but one of many social protests they examine for the period.[9]

These previous studies have rightly underlined the fragmentation, formalism, and lack of coordination and disunity of protests following 17 October. However, the causes of such fragmentation and disunity are multiple and are the result of a combination of longer term and short-term social and political factors which cannot always be reduced to the question of Algerian independence; in particular, Communist/non-Communist tensions on the left must be given their full worth, since such tensions impacted heavily on 17 October and afterwards.[10] Furthermore, Chapters 8 and 9 argue that reactions to 17 October also marked something of a watershed in relation to previous protests during the war and fed into the rapidly evolving political and social dynamics of the late war period. The boost to the anti-fascist 'consensus' that emerged from late 1961 onwards arguably had its roots in the initial phase of protests specifically linked to the repression on 17 October. The Communist left's subsuming of its denunciation of this repression into a wider and longer standing anti-fascist critique of the Gaullist government and the security forces, eventually culminated in a more unified left capable of generating protests in defence of democracy, in opposition to OAS and police violence (19 December 1961), and for 'Peace in Algeria' (as opposed to 'Independence'). Reactions to the deaths of nine protestors at the hands of police, this time on 8 February 1962 at Charonne, reinforced and accelerated this existing evolution. Charonne, both the event and the reactions to it, merely confirmed the relative disappearance of 17 October that had already occurred within most sectors of French society, and provided an event that, for political reasons, was far more 'worthy' of commemoration than 17 October.

[6] Amiri, *La Bataille de France*; Branche, *La Torture*, Thénault, *Une drôle de justice*.

[7] See Sylvie Thénault, 'La Presse silencieuse? Un préjugé', *Carnet d'échanges*, 1 (May 1999), 23–8.

[8] Amiri, *Les Fantômes*.

[9] See Danielle Tartakowsky, *Les Manifestations de rue en France 1918–1968* (Paris: Publications de la Sorbonne, 1997); Mann, 'Les Manifestations'.

[10] See Marc Heurgon, Histoire du P.S.U., i. *La Fondation et la guerre d'Algérie (1958–1962)* (Paris: La Découverte, 1994). The main elements of the Communist pole were the PCF and CGT, and of the non-Communist bloc, the CFTC, Union nationale des étudiants de France (UNEF), Parti socialiste unifié (PSU), and SFIO.

These questions are the subject of Chapters 7 to 9, which consider four main time-frames: the period prior to 17 October: the five-month period between October 1961 and February 1962; the period from March to September 1962, examining the end-of-war amnesty policies and the conflicts within Algerian nationalism; the respective influence of all these developments until the late 1960s.

However, what of the afterlives of the events of 17 October? We know that the effects of state terror often induce silence not only at the time but for decades afterwards, such is the internalization of fear at speaking out by groups subjected to such policies. When experiential groups are economically, socially, and culturally marginalized migrant communities enjoying little support from French society on this question, and cannot identify with the official Algerian version, conditions for speaking out and seeking justice are far from conducive. However, the history of the multiple memories of 17 October shows, on the contrary, the surprisingly unpredictable way in which memories previously 'concealed' from wide-scale public awareness can eventually re-emerge in the light of changing political, social, and cultural circumstances. Chapters 9 to 12 deal with these questions, and the following discussion provides a conceptual overview to these later chapters with regard to the sociology of memory and the politics of memory, as the analysis moves on from the event to the various symbolic meanings relating to 17 October and how their memorial representations select and rearrange that past.

STUDYING MEMORIES

How should the historian understand, and in turn study, memory, particularly in relation to its manifestations over many decades? Memory can be the capacity to remember, but also the modes of remembering, and the context and content of what individuals and societies remember. This study is mainly concerned with what memories contain, and the contexts in which memories exist, decline, or emerge. Memory is the 'modality of our relation to the past', that which links past and present.[11] Whether conscious or involuntary, individual memory can be understood as the always incomplete representation and reconstruction of the past, while the frameworks stimulating memory shape in an important way not just what memories we have (what we keep from the past) but the forms these memories take, showing the influence of the present on the past. Indeed, given that the frameworks within which the event in the past was initially experienced are never identical to those at the point of recollection, memory is inscribed within a perceptual difference, precisely because it is a reworking, in the present, of the past.

These fundamental aspects to our understanding of memory come from the work of sociologist Maurice Halbwachs (1877–1945) who established the term

[11] Richard Terdiman, *Past Present: Modernity and the Memory Crisis* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1993), 7.

social framework of memory (*cadre social de la mémoire*), and insisted on memory always being a reconstruction of the past shaped by the present.[12] Halbwachs outlined a theory for the essential predispositions to remember and forget within society. The social frameworks of memory have a polysemic quality within Halbwachs's work, functioning on two different—but linked—levels. The first level relates to the way in which time, language, and space provide interpretational structures—and hence dispositions—to remember or forget. These social frameworks facilitate the 'localization' of memories within a specific society:[13] for Halbwachs, 'no memory is possible outside of the frameworks that people living in society use to focus on and retrieve their recollections'.[14] A second, more specific sense of social framework of memory is the 'collective framework'—the memory frameworks of particular groups within society (e.g. professions, families, organizations).[15] For Halbwachs, social frameworks operating at both general (societal) and specific (group) levels appear to be linked: the constitution of the shared memory of a specific group would rely on the wider memory frameworks of the society in which it was placed.

Halbwachs emphasized the continual interaction of individual and 'collective' frameworks and memories, often placing emphasis on the 'collective'. Today, analysts of memory generally agree that the representational frameworks within group memories that are available to individuals do indeed influence our ability to remember and the contours and content such memories will take. However, by stressing the primacy of the collective, the term 'collective memory' potentially removes agency from the individual, and presumes homogeneity within the 'collective' that may not be forthcoming.[16] As Marie-Claire Lavabre's work has shown, we cannot simply presume a 'collective' identity common to all members of a group: memories of a political party or movement, for example, only become 'collective' when the codified version of a party's past provides a version within which individuals can recognize their lived experience.[17] This study will use the term 'collective' when it refers to group memories where there is some attestable sense of unified remembering through shared frameworks by members of that group, although social memories, as a more generic term stressing the articulation of collective and individual, will be more often used.

How can we understand the often tense relationship between history and memory?[18] Historical research has defined itself primarily in terms of temporal distance: this distance constitutes the condition of possibility for having the past

[12] See Maurice Halbwachs, *Les Cadres sociaux de la mémoire* (Paris: Albin Michel, 1994; 1st publ. 1925), 92. See also M.Halbwachs, *La Mémoire collective* (Paris: Albin Michel, 1997; 1st publ. 1950). On Halbwachs, see Gérard Namer's important afterwords to these critical edns. of *Les Cadres sociaux* and *La Mémoire collective*.

[13] Halbwachs, *Les Cadres sociaux*, 126–7, 143.

[14] Ibid. 79.

[15] Namer in Halbwachs, *Les Cadres sociaux*, 'Postface', 328.

[16] James Fentress and Chris Wickham, *Social Memory* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1992), p. ix. See also Namer, in Halbwachs, *La Mémoire collective*, 'Postface', 264–7.

[17] Marie-Claire Lavabre, *Le Fil rouge: Sociologie de la mémoire communiste* (Paris: Presses de la FNSP, 1994).

[18] See Paul Ricœur, *La Mémoire, l'histoire, l'oubli* (Paris: Seuil, 2001).

(and, here, representations of the past within memory) as an object of study. This deceivingly clear separation between history and memory—the former separated from the past and the latter constituted by the past within the present—was also overlaid by the supposed objectivity of historical enquiry (and historical time) as opposed to the subjectivity of memory. In addition, for Halbwachs, history took over once memory died out: history was not and could not be part of lived experience.[19] However, since the 1960s, historians have accepted that history is itself a representation of the past and that it could be mobilized for political ends, forged very often by the concerns of the present.[20] Furthermore, as Katherine Hodgkin and Susannah Radstone argue, historians are today less interested in 'the notion of memory as either "true" or "mistaken"', insisting instead on the idea of 'memory as process, and how to understand its motivation and meaning', a position adopted in Part II.[21] Throughout Part II, we will also see that where memory transmission to subsequent generations is absent, the recourse to history can provide a key resource for memory work, just as historians, ourselves included, have looked to memorial representations of 17 October as an additional source. This is not to collapse history and memory, but to suggest that they can work together.

Historians' interest in memory studies is relatively recent.[22] Henry Rousso's ground-breaking work has examined the conflicting representations of the Vichy past, looking at both the historical event and its various, and highly contentious, memorial afterlives.[23] His work provides a suggestive periodization of the various forms and levels of intensity of how Vichy has been spoken and written about that can be partially applied to the politics of memory relating to the Algerian War.[24] Benjamin Stora has succinctly traced the various memorial stakes in both Algeria and France regarding the Algerian War, and this approach provides an essential backdrop for the inter-related nature of memory and history in the Franco-Algerian context.[25] Pierre Nora's important edited series *Les Lieux de mémoire* (The Realms of Memory)[26] showed the complex shifts in the production and reception of representations of the past from a long-term historical perspective. For Nora, it was only possible to objectify earlier memorial practices seeking to integrate nation within the state because rapid social, political, and cultural change in France since 1945 had led to the partial disintegration of Republican (and older

[19] Halbwachs, *La Mémoire collective*, 'Mémoire collective et mémoire historique'.

[20] See Joël Candau, *Mémoire et identité* (Paris: PUF, 1998), 128–9, 169–70.

[21] Katherine Hodgkin and Susannah Radstone, 'Introduction', in their *Contested Pasts: The Politics of Memory* (London and New York: Routledge, 2003), 4.

[22] Kerwin Lee Klein, 'On the Emergence of *Memory* in Historical Discourse', *Representations*, 69 (Winter 2000), 127–50.

[23] Rousso, *Le Syndrome de Vichy*.

[24] Rousso, 'Les Raisins verts'.

[25] Stora, *La Gangrène*; Benjamin Stora, '1999–2003, guerre d'Algérie, les accélérations de la mémoire', in Harbi and Stora, *La Guerre d'Algérie*.

[26] Pierre Nora (ed.), *Les Lieux de mémoire*, 7 vols. (Paris: Gallimard, 1984–92), tr. as *Realms of Memory: Rethinking the French Past*, by A. Goldhammer (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996–8).

established) symbols of French identity.[27] However, with two exceptions, the series did not seek to assess the memorial impact of France's empire, or of the attendant colonial migrations.[28] By tracing the contours and content of the memories of 17 October, this study aims to provide a more inclusive understanding of the various memorial practices operating in France since 1961, and shows how the national and the colonial dimensions of French history are inseparable. Part II therefore combines a study of memory relating to 17 October with a wider study of the politics of memory relating to the Algerian War, Algerian colonial and post-colonial migrations, and various activist memories.[29] More generally, the history of the memories of 17 October covers many different aspects of memory studies, making for an interesting case study over four decades. The analysis in Part II highlights many key themes.

First, the events of 17 October resulted in a plurality of memories. We refer to memories in the plural since the various actors at the time (e.g. Algerians, the French witnesses, the police) invested the massacre with a variety of significations, many of them diametrically opposed (victims, on-lookers, perpetrators, etc.). In addition, within each of these groups, memories of the events of 17 October were diverse. Part II reflects on the subsequent personal, political, and social trajectories of those involved in the October 1961 events, and how these link in with the transmission or non-transmission of memory. For the descendants of Algerian demonstrators, or for those who went on the 17 October protests as children, the events will probably have different symbolic meanings. Diverse to start with, we see a further diversification of memories as post-war generations increasingly replace those of the war.

Second, Part II also examines the politics of memory relating to 17 October, that is, the ways in which various campaigns and debates have given prominence to the events of October 1961 in order to bring about social and political change. Undertaking such an analysis involves tracing the changing symbolic meanings that various groups attach to the October events and the political, social, and cultural contexts in which these meanings emerge. The history of memory undertaken in this study therefore shows the articulation and reciprocal interests or antagonisms between different memorial representations of 17 October at any one moment and over time. It looks at which memories are being carried and/or transmitted at given moments and by which memory carriers (*porteurs de mémoire*)—whether collective (family, association, political party, state) or individual, official or oppositional, public or private.[30] It looks at how memories may

[27] See Nora's 'Entre mémoire et histoire', in Pierre Nora (ed.), *Les Lieux de mémoire I*, *La République* (Paris: Gallimard, 1984), pp. xvii–xlii.

[28] Charles-Robert Ageron, 'L'Exposition coloniale de 1931', in Nora (ed.), *Les Lieux de mémoire I, La République*; Gérard Noiriel, 'Français et étrangers', in Nora (ed.) *Les Lieux de mémoire III*, i. *Les France: Conflits et partage* (1992).

[29] The term 'memory practice' comes from Klein, 'Emergence of *Memory*', 135.

[30] The terms *porteurs de mémoire* and the idea of 'mobilizing' memory are from Léla Benchérif, 'Les Enjeux d'une reconnaissance sociale des mémoires des immigrations', *Écarts d'identité*, 92 (Mar. 2000), 45–7.

remain amongst only a minority of the members of a group to be given greater prominence by subsequent generations in a new context.[31] The history of memory undertaken in this study also examines why it was, or is, considered important for such memories to be mobilized within the politics of memory and for what cause (for example, demands for truth and justice, or the strengthening of generational, national, ethnic, migrant, or spatial identities). It analyses the content of such memories, and how campaigning groups may solicit and represent experiential memories, and via which vectors (cultural or political).[32] Debates, commemorations, and campaigning literature constitute political vectors. Cultural vectors such as fiction and film have also played a significant role. It is also important to consider the periodization of such expressions, and the peaks in memorial activity around each major commemoration (e.g. 1981, 1986, 1991, and 2001), since anniversaries provide an excellent vantage point from which to assess shifting memorial configurations and institutional contexts.

A third, linked aspect of Chapters 10–12 relates to the multi-generational nature of the memory work surrounding 17 October. Halbwachs used the term 'borrowed' memory (*mémoire empruntée*) to describe a memory that we obtain from elsewhere—acquired or transmitted, in any case second-hand—when we have not experienced an event ourselves.[33] This distinction is useful, although memories obtained in this way, often concerning subsequent generations, may well 'speak' to individuals and groups in varying levels of intensity. For example, many descendants of Algerian migrants may well invest a different—probably more intense—meaning into the memories of 17 October they have adopted. Evocations of 17 October have often served to forge 'narratives of resistance' against racism, colonial and post-colonial violence, and as a component within the much wider memories of colonial migrations.[34] Chapters 11 and 12 examine how and why descendants of Algerian migrants have highlighted 17 October within either individual memory work or campaigns, and how we can measure the impact of such campaigns. As James Fentress and Chris Wickham state: 'the way memories of the past are generated and understood by given social groups is a direct guide to how they understand their position in the present.'[35] For memory activists, 17 October offers a particular resource in that it can symbolize not only perceived racism, but also anti-colonial resistance—the refusal of repression by previous generations of Algerians. This choice of memorial symbols comes from a limited range of possibilities within a group's historical consciousness, understood as the awareness of the past—whether from personal experience or acquired knowledge—that contributes to a shared sense of belonging and historicity. This campaigning instituted a complex dialectic between past and present, potential victimhood and agency, and may have involved a decontextualized vision of the

[31] See Halbwachs, *La Mémoire collective*, 135.

[32] This use of the term 'vectors' derives from Nancy Wood, *Vectors of Memory: Legacies of Trauma in Postwar Europe* (Oxford: Berg, 1999), 2.

[33] Halbwachs, *La Mémoire collective*, 99.

[34] Fentress and Wickham, *Social Memory*, 117.

[35] Ibid. 126.

past as it attempts to persuade French society of the significance of the violent events of 17 October.

A fourth key dimension highlighted in later chapters of Part II relates to the way in which memories of 17 October work on a number of different levels—individual, family, wider group, national, and trans-national. Cutting across these different levels, we will also see that there may be different forms of memory. For example, we can understand 17 October 1961 as a marginal memory in France since it does not fit in with any of the various dominant memories within society.[36] More specifically, there was no French official memory of 17 October. Until the 1980s, the fragmented and low-level public memories of 17 October in France existed as part of the counter-memories to the French state, but also as part of activist or militant memories on the far left and former anti-colonial left that mobilized 17 October in relation to the Communist left. In terms of official Algerian memory, on the other hand, the Algerian state instigated highly formalized commemorations of 17 October 1961 in 1968 with which many Algerians found it hard to identify. This study traces the power relations between these various, often competing, memorial representations of 17 October that represent a wide cross-section of forms of memory: official, dominant, activist, and/or oppositional. Subsequent memory activism in relation to 17 October would therefore seek to create and negotiate autonomous 'space' in relation to the Algerian state, the French left, and the French state. We need to examine the shifts in the political (often institutional) context to study the memorial afterlives of 17 October.

Because of these initially very constricting political conditions, many Algerians retreated into a strategic silence regarding all their wartime experiences, showing the way in which public and personal memories (and silences) are articulated, a further key element in Chapters 10–12. Many studies of memory conflate silence (non-verbalization) with forgetting, since they place great emphasis on an assessment of memory purely within the public realm (e.g. media, academic, and political debates). However, as we shall see, forgetting only usually intervenes in the longer term where this silence has translated into an absence of transmission of memory, whether within the experiential group at family or group level, or within society more widely.[37] Part II also traces how individuals situate themselves within such variously collective and at times dominant representations of the past—or silence—and how such representations enable or hinder the conditions of possibility for the transmission of memories of 17 October in both France and Algeria.

Indeed, while 17 October relates very centrally to the Algerian War, we cannot understand the history of its memories without showing how, for Algerians, war memories and migrant memories are closely intertwined, providing a further

[36] The notion of 'dominant memories', existing in the plural, comes from Rousso, *Le Syndrome de Vichy*, 12.

[37] Fentress and Wickham, *Social Memory*, 88, describe something being 'socially, even if not individually, forgotten'.

essential dimension to this study.[38] These migrant memories call for a transnational approach to reveal the complex play of mutual influences and exchange across the Mediterranean regarding the movement of people, ideas, values, and attitudes to the past, present, and future.

Finally, as we saw in the General Introduction, the politics of memory of 17 October belongs of course to a wider field, that of the politics of memory of the Algerian War more generally that, since the key 'tipping point' of the Papon trial (1997–8), has become a central element of political and media interest. Part II analyses the extent to which the recovery of the memory of 17 October can be situated within the wider history of the 'return' of the memories of the Algerian War. The combination of thematic and chronological approaches in Chapters 9–12 aims to underline how changes in the dynamics of experiential groups and/or campaigning groups articulate with these key transformations at national political level in France and Algeria. The chapters reflect chronological stages of virtual public silence (Chapters 9 and 10, 1961–79), followed by a slow emergence (Chapter 11, 1980–97), leading to higher visibility from 1997 onwards (Chapter 12).

Consonant with the focus on both event and its memorial afterlives, the interviews undertaken for this research sought both to examine particular elements of the 17 October repression, and the various memorial strategies individuals and groups had adopted since that time in relation to these events. The variety of interviewees meant that some evoked their past experiences in a well-composed narrative since they had often spoken on the subject, while others were speaking publicly for the first time. Interviewing people about often traumatic events involves reading the silences as well as listening to what is said. The majority of interviewees very willingly participated in an academic project that they hoped would give greater visibility to a subject that was of great importance to them and, indeed, for some, had proved a defining life experience. The fact that the interviewer was neither French nor Algerian probably helped this process of disclosure. In Part II, the combination of interviews with wartime actors alongside those of more recent memory activists hopefully enlightens the sense of the history of memory being an ongoing dialogue between past and present.

Men usually construct the public memories of groups, so the construction of social memories also needs to consider gender power relations, and men and women may remember different aspects of the past or the same aspects in varying ways.[39] We also need to understand how different societies (here France and Algeria) remember, and to assess how attitudes to the past—and, here, particularly painful experiences in the past—impact on the conditions of possibility for the verbalization of memories or more formalized memory work. With their emphasis on Western and/or print-based societies, their conceptions of the relationship

[38] Ch. 10 examines these migrant memories.

[39] Selma Leydesdorff, Luisa Passerini, and Paul Thompson, 'Introduction', in their *Gender and Memory*, International Yearbook of Oral History and Life Stories, 4 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996).

between the individual and collective, and the virtual absence of gendered perspectives, the work of Maurice Halbwachs and others, while highly stimulating, need to be supplemented with more applied studies examining the politics of memory.[40]

The political and social histories charted in Part II exist at the interstices of a number of key developments in post-colonial France and Algeria. The democratization of access to culture and the media and the end of the state monopoly of information (in France) has helped social movements to articulate specific identities not based around the Republican national model. During the same period, anti-racist campaigning has largely moved its point of focus from anti-Semitism to post-colonial racism. In addition, the rise in memorial consciousness has provided a 'language' for the discussion of memory, often within the contexts of a greater awareness of the centrality of reparations and human rights questions.[41] The emergence of the memories of 17 October into the public domain therefore simultaneously partially results from and coincides with these overlapping, deeper level evolutions, many of which are not restricted to the French or Algerian contexts.[42]

[40] See Jocelyne Dakhlia, *L'Oubli de la cité: La Mémoire collective à l'épreuve du lignage dans le jérid tunisien* (Paris: La Découverte, 1990), esp. 5–18.

[41] We are grateful to Margaret Atack for this observation.

[42] See John Torpey (ed.), *Politics and the Past: On Repairing Historical Injustices* (New York and Oxford: Rowman & Littlefield, 2003); Emmanuel Kattan, *Penser le devoir de mémoire* (Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 2002).

7

Contesting Colonial Repression, 1945–1961

How can we account for the weaknesses of metropolitan French civil society during the process of routinization of state repression against Algerians from 1945 to September 1961, and how should we measure the impact of the campaigning against repression that did occur? While attempting to answer these questions, this chapter also assesses the discourses and modes of intervention of the various French solidarity groups and the values and motives their activists advanced. These themes are studied within a series of evolving relations: between the radical anti-colonial left, wider anti-war groups, and the mainstream parties of the left; between the radical anti-colonial left and French public opinion; between the mainstream parties of the left and the FLN. This thematic analysis is articulated within two key developments: the impact of the voting of the Special Powers Act in March 1956, and the evolving late-war dynamic that emerged from September 1960 onwards. This complex series of relations forms the essential backdrop not only to the post-17 October reactions, but also to later memorial dynamics in both France and Algeria.

ANTI-COLONIALISM AND THE ISOLATION OF ALGERIAN NATIONALIST MOVEMENTS BEFORE 1954

Only a longer term historical perspective can fully indicate the ambivalent relationship between the Socialists and Communists and Algerian nationalism that would impact so crucially on the reactions of the left to the events of 17 October.[1] Anti-colonialism, defined as opposition to the colonial system *qua* system, was almost non-existent within French socialism. The SFIO played a key role in implementing the Third Republic's 'civilizing mission' to bring secular modernity to the colonies and was therefore uncomfortable in challenging anything except what it saw as the 'excesses' of colonial governance. As Gilles Manceron has

[1] See House, Antiracism and Antiracist Discourse; Jean-Pierre Biondi and Gilles Morin, *Les Anticolonialistes (1881–1962)* (Paris: Hachette, 1992), 258; Claude Liauzu, *Aux origines des tiers-mondismes: Colonisés et anticolonialistes en France, 1919–1939* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 1982).

shown, most Socialists found it difficult to accept the idea that colonized peoples should have the right to control their own destiny.[2] In contrast, until 1935, the PCF led an explicitly anti-imperialist policy from its anti-capitalist standpoint that imperialism resulted in specific forms of colonial domination. The PCF supported the founding of the Algerian nationalist Étoile nord-africaine (ENA) in 1926. However, after 1935, the PCF changed its former anti-imperialist policy, considering the French colonies as allies against fascism. Significantly, for the PCF, the revolutionary initiative should remain in the hands of the French working classes: it was therefore not for pro-independence movements in the colonies to seize the political initiative, contrary to the Leninist revolutionary model that the PCF had espoused until 1935.[3] In addition, the PCF was suspicious of religious and ethnic identities within Algerian nationalism that questioned the primacy of class.[4] Distrust of Islamic identities also led to timid responses against anti-Algerian repression by the anti-racist organization, the Ligue internationale contre l'antisémitisme, founded in 1927, and the better-established human rights organization, the Ligue des droits de l'homme (LDH, founded in 1898), both profoundly informed by the Republican tradition.[5] Termed the 'apotheosis' of French colonialism—best exemplified by the 1931 colonial exhibition in Paris—the 1920s and 1930s saw the education and socialization of generations of metropolitan French citizens, most of whom took for granted the 'civilizational superiority' of French over Algerians.[6]

The inter-war years were also the start of concerted, organized anti-colonial resistance, but Algerian nationalists such as the ENA (1926–37), and its successor, the Parti du peuple algérien (PPA, 1937–9), were marginalized within the metropolitan and Algerian contexts in relation to the mainstream left and wider French society.[7] The far left (Trotskyites, anarchists) constituted the most radical inter-war anti-colonial groups,[8] and believed that movements against imperialism in the colonies could have a radical and positive impact on emancipation from capitalism in France. This anti-imperialist far left encouraged practical solidarity with Algerians as well as ideological support.[9] The 1939–45 war and immediate

[2] Gilles Manceron, *Marianne et les colonies: Une introduction à l'histoire coloniale de la France* (Paris: La Découverte, 2003), 249–51.

[3] See Joly, *French Communist Party*. For a useful overview of the continuities and transformations of PCF policy on the colonies, see Alain Ruscio (ed.), *La Question coloniale dans 'L'Humanité' (1904–2004)* (Paris: La Dispute, 2005).

[4] Evans, *Memory of Resistance*, 215.

[5] See Jim House, 'Anti-Racism in France, 1898–1962: Modernity and Beyond', in Floya Anthias and Cathie Lloyd (eds.), *Rethinking Anti-Racisms: From Theory to Practice* (London: Routledge, 2002); Catherine Lloyd, *Discourses of Antiracism in France* (London: Ashgate, 1998).

[6] Raoul Girardet, 'L'Apothéose de la "plus grande France": L'Idée coloniale devant l'opinion française (1930–1935)', *Revue française de science politique*, 18/6 (Dec. 1968), 1085–1114.

[7] See MacMaster, *Colonial Migrants*; Rabah Aissaoui, 'Immigration, Ethnicity and National Identitiy: Maghrebis' Socio-Political Mobilization and Discourse in the Inter-war Period and during the 1970s in France', Ph.D. dissertation (University of Leeds, 2001).

[8] See Liauzu, *Aux origines des tiers-mondismes*.

[9] Benjamin Stora, *Nationalistes algériens et révolutionnaires français au temps du Front populaire* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 1987), 102.

post-Liberation period saw little change to this dynamic.[10] More generally, the post-war period saw calls for national unity and the creation of the French Union that equated re-establishing French power on the world stage with the continuing possession of an empire.[11] Maintaining this empire led to a wave of colonial atrocities.

Due to the repression in Sétif and elsewhere in Algeria in May 1945 (analysed in Chapter 1), the conceptual gap deepened between majority French public opinion and the mainstream left (and right) on one hand, and Algerians and their few metropolitan supporters on the other. This 'Sétif generation' of Algerians harboured very few illusions regarding the capacities of the mainstream left for solidarity with Algerian nationalism—spearheaded after 1946 by the MTLD under Messali Hadj—and this distrust would continue until 1962.[12] The PCF's reactions to Sétif were indeed laden with suspicion of Algerian nationalist motives.[13] However, when the scale and nature of French repression did become an issue for the Party, *L'Humanité*'s protests were censored.[14] After the deepening of the cold war in 1947, Communists and non-Communists would no longer work together, thus splitting any possible opposition to violent colonial governance.[15] Algeria was not the only theatre for this violence: a similar schema applies to the wide-scale repression in Madagascar in 1947–8.[16] However, the PCF prioritized reactions to repression in Indo-China due to the key geopolitical interests the war represented for the Party,[17] following the departure of PCF ministers from government after 1947.

The MTLD denounced the political repression inflicted on it and the Algerian communities in France, such as the 'large racist round-up operations' of 8 December 1951, when police detained many MTLD supporters in central Paris.[18] Close to the PCF, the anti-racist association Mouvement contre le racisme et pour la Paix (Movement against Racism and for Peace, MRAP) was a new ally in such denunciations.[19] From 1949 onwards, the MRAP, close to the PCF, led campaigns against the repression of Algerian nationalism and the racialized forms such repression often took. Composed mainly of left-wing Jewish people who had belonged to Resistance networks, the MRAP accepted that there was indeed a category of 'colonial racism', which could include anti-Algerian and anti-black racism.[20]

[10] See Sylvain Pattieu, *Les Camarades des frères: Trotskistes et libertaires dans la guerre d'Algérie* (Paris: Syllepse, 2002), 13–55.

[11] See Raymond F. Betts, *France and Decolonization, 1900–1960* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1991).

[12] Interview (J.H.) with former FLN *cadre* Saad Abssi, Gennevilliers, 18 Apr. 2003.

[13] Rajsfus, *1953*, 29–35.

[14] Yves Benot, *Massacres coloniaux 1944–1950: La IVe République et la mise au pas des colonie françaises* (Paris: La Découverte, 2005 edn.), 60. For the specifically Algerian context, see Mekhaled, *Chroniques d'un massacre*, 102.

[15] Benot, *Les Massacres coloniaux*, 132.

[16] Ibid. 114–45.

[17] Jacques Dalloz, *La Guerre d'Indochine 1945–1954* (Paris: Seuil, 1987), 164.

[18] *L'Algérie libre*, 48 (10 Mar.1952).

[19] Latterly, Mouvement contre le racisme et pour l'Amitié entre les peuples (Movement against Racism and for Friendship between Peoples).

[20] On the MRAP and the immediate post-war context, see House, 'Anti-Racism in France, 1898–1962', 122–6.

The MTLD and the MRAP, albeit from different perspectives, sought to establish a direct parallel between French state practices under Vichy and those practised by the French state against Algerians. The MRAP produced posters stating: 'Like in the dark days of the Occupation/Racist round-ups in Paris /... the police picked out their victims according to their appearance (*au faciès*)', in an attempt to provoke the forms of anti-racist solidarity seen during the Occupation.[21] This analogy with Vichy and evocation of its memory and that of the Resistance would become major subsequent themes, also used knowingly by the FLN and its French support networks, as we shall see. Such themes were, however, ambivalent. While it is easy to understand the palpable sense of foreboding that reminders of repressive state *savoir-faire* would have provoked in those having suffered Vichy persecution, such campaigning registers usually served as a substitute for explicit reference to previous colonial repression. As Pierre Vidal-Naquet has pointed out, before the late 1950s there was little awareness of French anti-colonialism or colonial violence that could serve as a resource to ground such protest.[22] Hence in the 1950s, the only way of approaching the racialized colonial power relations of post-war France was through an analogy with non-colonial forms of racism. In the absence of significant anti-colonial protest over many decades, colonial governance had shaped what majority metropolitan opinion knew, retained, and remembered.

The killing of seven protestors (six of them Algerian) at the Place de la Nation in 1953 on the traditional left-wing 14 July commemorative demonstrations represents an interesting preconfiguration of the 17 October 1961 violence and the reactions this violence provoked. First, similarly to 17 October, Algerians were protesting on 14 July 1953 for an end to anti-nationalist repression and racism.[23] Second, there had been a number of tensions between the PCF and the MTLD before the demonstration that meant that those Algerians marching within the left-wing parade were more isolated than was usually the case. In Mohammed Harbi's words, PCF–MTLD relations were at this point 'a conflictual alliance'.[24] The position of the MTLD cortège in the march eloquently expressed the position of 'outsider' it occupied in relation to the French left. Marching with the French left, Algerians had a separate agenda (independence, the release of Messali Hadj, an end to police repression) that the left seemed reluctant to adopt.[25] Algerians were simultaneously inside and outside the French left, on its borders, through choice or rejection. This pattern would recur, in exacerbated form, in October 1961.

[21] *Droit et liberté*, 42 (146) (22–8 Sept. 1950).

[22] Pierre Vidal-Naquet, *Les Assassins de la mémoire* (Paris: La Découverte, 1987), 170.

[23] See Emmanuel d'Astier de la Vigerie's speech, *JODP* (AN), 17 July 1953 (16 July 1953 session), 3506, 3514.

[24] Mohammed Harbi, 'Entre mémoire et histoire: Un témoignage sur la politisation de l'immigration maghrébine en France', in Kadri and Prévost, *Mémoires algériennes*, 53. There was more cooperation between the PCF and Algerian nationalism before than after 1956.

[25] See Pitti, 'Ouvriers algériens', 384–400.

Third, as would happen after 17 October, there was a bitter debate within the PCF and the Communist trade union Confédération générale du travail (CGT) after the 1953 demonstration concerning the extent to which Algerians had been left isolated during the police violence and whether more could have been done to protest afterwards.[26] Fourth, the PCF chose not to let these unexpected events deter it from its main priorities.[27] A further point of comparison between July 1953 and October 1961 is that the left-wing press and Communist members of parliament nonetheless directly challenged the Interior Ministry's version of events, without this pressure resulting in any revision of the official version that police had fired in self-defence.[28] Communist deputy Georges Cogniot said that the government could not behave in metropolitan France towards Algerians like it did 'towards colonial peoples in their own countries'.[29] The right supported the police version of events, accused Communists of 'subversion' and used the political abuses in the Soviet Union to deny the PCF any moral legitimacy to intervene. The authorities then seized the MTLD's newspaper that featured a special issue denouncing police violence.[30] While the killings attracted greater publicity in Algeria as the bodies of those Algerians killed arrived back in Algiers on 25 July 1953,[31] this affair soon entirely disappeared from French public debate.

These killings usefully illustrate the essential ideological divisions present in 1953 and which would be exacerbated but also reformulated during the course of the Algerian War. These were clearly not conducive political or social conditions in which to build a movement of mass solidarity with Algerians in France. Prior to 1954, therefore, Algerians' bodies had already become sites on which structurally discriminatory colonial power focused, and which sought to relegate the colonized to a situation of 'infra-humanity'.[32] In France, few frameworks existed within which the memory of anti-colonial resistance and its violent suppression could take hold.

THE LEFT AND OPPOSITION GROUPS (1954–1960): VALUES AND MEANS OF INTERVENTION

The voting of the Special Powers by both the Socialist SFIO and the PCF in March 1956 constituted a defining moment from many French and Algerian perspectives and brought about a new political dynamic. Indeed, in the eyes of the FLN and French activists sympathetic to Algerian independence and/or hostile to the continuation of the war alike, the vote clarified already existing suspicions

[26] Tartakowsky, 'Un 14 juillet', 484–5. [27] Ibid. 486.
[28] On reactions, see Rajsfus, *1953*, 69–96, 193–239.
[29] *JODP* (AN), 17 July 1953 (16 July 1953 session), 3507.
[30] Rajsfus, *1953*, 114. See *L'Algérie libre* (29 July 1953). [31] Rajsfus, *1953*, 114–15.
[32] Sidi Mohammed Barkat, 'De la terreur dans l'état de droit', in Sidi Mohammed Barkat (ed.), *Des Français contre la terreur d'État (Algérie 1954–1962)* (Paris: Reflex, 2002).

concerning the likelihood of support from the left—the PCF in particular—since 1954 and led to the FLN moving away from the PCF and CGT. Why did a party that espoused anti-imperialist values vote a law that gave the state exceptional repressive powers in the fight against Algerian nationalism? The PCF had been afraid of an independent Algeria falling under the sway of the USA.[33] It also wanted to shed some of its cold war isolation within the French political landscape. The Party's position was that building a united front with the SFIO in government would isolate right and far-right elements and enable the PCF to retain some influence over the conduct of the war to curb, rather than encourage, high levels of repression.[34]

PCF activists and members did not always follow their Party's official positions.[35] These dissident Communists argued that the PCF had to lead by example.[36] For many anti-colonial campaigners, the PCF's theoretical anti-colonialism created a horizon of expectancy that it did not fulfil in Algeria.[37] The Special Powers vote further radicalized such activists, who repositioned themselves either formally outside the Party (or were excluded), or continued their membership whilst engaged in clandestine support for the FLN. As we shall see, this allowed increased spontaneity, but also brought political marginalization. This lack of powerful support for such protest would prove a major factor after 17 October. For the PCF, such pro-FLN activities were irresponsible and opportunistic since any action needed to be on a mass scale and led by the Party.

What were the motives, discourses, and modes of intervention of the anti-colonial opposition groups more generally that emerged in France during the Algerian War? It is important to map out this field to assess the limited levels of impact such campaigning had. By 'opposition' groups, we mean those diverse associations, networks, and journals that opposed official policy on the war, criticizing the moral and political effects of state repression. These opposition groups often straddled tight ideological boundaries and could contain activists from the centre to the far left. For example, regarding torture, there were important distinctions between those that saw torture as systemic (e.g. Gisèle Halimi, Jean-Paul Sartre) and those that viewed torture as the result of individual 'aberrations'.[38] Because the continuation of the war often saw a radicalization of earlier ideological positions, individual activists might well change position. The various distinctions and divisions between such groupings diminished their collective political weight. Within this undoubted heterogeneity, a relatively tight ideological 'demarcation' line often separated out the radical anti-colonial groups from the rest of the opposition groups. Differences centred on attitudes to the FLN and

[33] Joly, *French Communist Party*, 44. [34] Ibid. 107–8, 128.

[35] See Evans, *Memory of Resistance*; Joly, *French Communist Party*.

[36] Only in early 1957 did PCF General Secretary Maurice Thorez declare that an Algerian nation existed (Joly, *French Communist Party*, 48). [37] Evans, *Memory of Resistance*, 184.

[38] Pierre Vidal-Naquet, *La Torture dans la République: Essai d'histoire et de politique contemporaines, 1954–1962* (Paris: Minuit, 1972), 78, 81.

independence (as against 'Peace in Algeria' for the more moderate), to the FLN's use of violence, practical (as opposed to verbal) support for Algerian independence, and whether or not activism was undertaken as part of a wider revolutionary project. Such differences remained in place up to October 1961 and beyond.[39]

The majority of campaigners often took what Pierre Vidal-Naquet has described as a 'Dreyfusard' position, denouncing the violation of Republican values that injustice, repression, and racism created and fostered.[40] In the divided political landscape within which these various politically marginalized opposition groups and individuals moved, perhaps the only consensual unifying theme was the denunciation of racism. Jean-François Sirinelli has argued that the absence of agreement on political issues led to the promotion of ethical themes in intellectual campaigning concerning the war (at least until 1960).[41] Intellectuals played a key role in publicizing abuses,[42] for example within the Comité Maurice Audin, set up in November 1957 after the 'disappearance' (in fact, torture then murder by the army) of the young Communist mathematician.[43]

Most of the opposition groups favoured legalist responses to repression. Many people saw their commitment as a civic duty to oppose the corruption of Republican values by the war. For Jacques Rancière, as the war progressed, there would be an increasing refusal of what the state was doing in the name of its citizens and a realization that the abuses came from a colonial war situation.[44] Sensitizing public opinion, denouncing repression and testifying to the consequences, started from the premise that citizens are essentially reasonable. Once informed of the true face of reason of state, citizens must act as a political and moral counter-balance to an executive betraying Republican values, since citizens shared collective responsibility for what the state was doing in their name. Campaigning therefore targeted three audiences simultaneously: French metropolitan public opinion, the left, and government.

These attempts to break through the wall of official secrecy and hence force French citizens to face up to the realities of state action represented a central theme of the 'information battle'.[45] For example, *Vérité-Liberté* (*Cahiers d'information sur la guerre d'Algérie*), formed in 1960, published banned or seized publications

[39] See Hervé Hamon and Patrick Rotman, *Les Porteurs de valises: La Résistance française à la guerre d'Algérie* (Paris: Seuil, 1979), 203–8; Jacques Charby, *Les Porteurs d'espoir: Les Réseaux de soutien au FLN pendant la guerre d'Algérie: Les Acteurs parlent* (Paris: La Découverte, 2004).

[40] Vidal-Naquet, *Face à la raison d'État*, 11.

[41] Jean-François Sirinelli, 'La Guerre d'Algérie, guerre des pétitions', in Jean-Pierre Rioux and Jean-François Sirinelli (eds.), *La Guerre d'Algérie et les intellectuels français* (Brussels: Complexe, 1991), 278.

[42] See James Le Sueur, *Uncivil War: Intellectuals and Identity Politics during the Decolonization of Algeria* (Philadelphia: University of Philadelphia Press, 2001); Jean-François Sirinelli, 'Les Intellectuels français en guerre d'Algérie', in Rioux and Sirinelli, *La Guerre d'Algérie*.

[43] Thénault, *Une drôle de justice*, 132.

[44] Jacques Rancière, 'The Cause of the Other', *Parallax*, 7 (Apr.–June 1998), 25–34 (tr. David Macey).

[45] Nils Anderson, 'L'Édition dans la résistance à la guerre d'Algérie', in Barkat, *Des Français contre la terreur d'État*, 124.

and those that publishers were reluctant to publish, and played a vital role in publicizing torture, repression, racism, and the transfer of repressive tactics from Algeria to France. Such 'truth extremists' (*extrémistes de la vérité*) also insisted on the need to establish proof of state responsibility for the killings/abuses, and justice for the victims.[46]

Thus many of the campaigns against violent colonial governance did not necessarily serve to mobilize for Algerian independence, but primarily involved an 'internal' critique of the *excesses* of the French state whose existence was not being intrinsically called into question.[47] With this position, the 'dis-identification'[48] from the state was transient and could be righted since activists identified with what they thought was (or should be) the 'real' Republican state's values and practices. The term 'dis-identification' could arguably also apply to the numerous dissident Communists in relation to the PCF and who sought, by their actions, to renew the left.[49] In fact, some French activists' motives and positions are harder to categorize as belonging to one of Pierre Vidal-Naquet's now well-known typology of 'Dreyfusard', 'Bolshevik,' or 'third-worldist' positions, the latter two categories implying a fundamental questioning of the political and social status quo.[50] Francis Jeanson, for example—one of the most outspoken supporters of the FLN's cause and the most well-known of the *porteurs de valises*—refuses any tight distinction between 'moral' and 'political' motives since he was also engaged as much 'for France' as he was 'for Algeria'.[51]

However, for a tiny minority of activists such as Jeanson, there would be a dis-identification from the French state's policies and a reidentification with the Algerian cause from a 'third-worldist' or revolutionary perspective *in addition* to their concerns as French citizens.[52] For these most radical of anti-colonial left activists (e.g. Jeune Résistance), Algerians were political actors involved in a legitimate political fight (consciously engaged) for freedom from unjust French rule, and decolonization was part of a major revolutionary battle. Algerians were not to be portrayed as simply *victims*— either of the French state or the FLN. Within such radical anti-colonial and anti-imperial positions, the crimes of the French state were merely further proof of the iniquitous colonialist system and formalistic,

[46] Letter dated 21 Apr. 1960 from Francis Jeanson to Jean-Paul Sartre, reproduced in *Les Temps modernes*, 169–70 (Apr.–May 1960), 1535–49, 1543.

[47] On this see Rita Maran, *Torture: The Role of Ideology during the French–Algerian War* (New York: Praeger, 1989), 147–8.

[48] Kristin Ross, *May '68 and its Afterlives* (Chicago and London: Chicago University Press, 2002), 39–40.

[49] Evans, *Memory of Resistance*, 204.

[50] Pierre Vidal-Naquet, 'Une fidélité têtue: La Résistance française à la guerre d'Algérie', *Vingtième siècle: Revue d'histoire*, 10 (1986), 3–19. Vidal-Naquet recognizes that some individuals may have been inspired by all three categories (*Mémoires 2: Le Trouble et la lumière 1955–1998* (Paris: Seuil/La Découverte, 1998), 159–60). References to the Resistance legacy could stem from a moderate position—identification with Republicanism—or from a position that, since France was an occupying force in Algeria, radical anti-colonial resistance was therefore both legitimate and necessary.

[51] Francis Jeanson, 'Engagement, violence, politique', in Barkat, *Des Français contre la terreur d'État*, 58. See also Francis Jeanson, *Notre guerre* (Paris: Berg, 2001; 1st publ. June 1960).

[52] See Rancière, 'Cause of the Other', and Jeanson, 'Engagement, violence, politique', 56.

'ritualistic' protest at such abuses was woefully insufficient. These radical anti-colonial activists would provide robust practical as well as ideological defence of Algerians' interests. The term *porteur*(*s*) *de valises*—often used in too loose a sense—should only designate those who helped the FLN in a logistic or practical capacity (e.g. transportation of FLN activists and money collected amongst the emigrant community, writing of FLN literature) and their numbers probably never exceeded one thousand. Centring round Francis Jeanson and Henri Curiel and their respective networks, these activists were keen to distinguish themselves from the wider anti-war groups and have their own specific memories of the war.[53]

As Martin Evans has shown, the reasons for the *porteurs de valises* to resist the war and engage in acts of practical solidarity with Algerians were highly diverse (political, religious, personal).[54] Indeed, given the high levels of hostility toward Algerians, it is useful to consider what specific ideological or experiential trajectories lead French people to be 'exceptional' and show solidarity of a political and/or humanitarian nature toward Algerians. For French people, it was possible, of course, to become aware of high levels of repression through reading the newspapers, magazines, flyers, and books that the various opposition groups published or distributed. However, those who had some direct experience of such repression—through having seen it for themselves in Algeria or in France—constituted a key reservoir of solidarity and sympathy for Algerians.[55] Others, such as the photographer Élie Kagan, would become active out of a feeling of injustice against the treatment of Jews during Vichy and a refusal that forms of racialized persecution should return.[56] For Monique Hervo, on the other hand, who provided humanitarian assistance in the Nanterre *bidonvilles*, the key factor was the awareness, inherited from her personal experiences during the Second World War, of how wars inevitably took their toll on the civilian population.[57]

Those individuals who knew about the nature and extent of anti-Algerian violence would play a key role after 17 October, and included not only the militant anti-war groups and individual activists, but those in the public sector (teachers, social workers, health workers), or French partners, and some friends, colleagues, or neighbours of Algerians. Such people had direct contact with the Algerian communities, in addition to those that witnessed anti-Algerian violence for the first time that night. Witnessing such violence built up 'invulnerable counter-knowledge';[58] the problem came in transmitting the realities of repression to a wider public—where indeed that choice was made.

[53] Marie-Pierre Ulloa, *Francis Jeanson: Un intellectuel en dissidence de la Résistance à la guerre d'Algérie* (Paris: Berg international, 2001), 245. [54] Evans, *Memory of Resistance*.

[55] See the case of key *porteur de valises* Georges Mattéi, a former conscript soldier in Algeria (Jean-Luc Einaudi, *Franc-tireur: Georges Mattéi, de la guerre d'Algérie à la guérrilla* (Paris: Éditions du Sextan/Danger public, 2004)).

[56] Patrick Rotman and Élie Kagan, *Le Reporter engagé: Trente ans d'instantanés* (Paris: Métailié, 1989), 61. [57] Interview (J.H.) with Monique Hervo, Albertville, 29 Apr. 2002.

[58] Evans, *Memory of Resistance*, 103.

In terms of the possible wider relays of the themes espoused by opposition groups, while the daily left-wing press often practised self-censorship (more than it was censored directly), *L'Humanité* and *Libération* (close to the PCF) gave a voice to legalistic opposition campaigning. Although politically moderate, *Le Monde* covered such campaigning, as did, from a more radical perspective, the weekly news magazines *L'Express* and *France-Observateur*. Publications like *Témoignages et documents* and *Vérité-Liberté* constituted a parallel press, while *Vérités pour* (started in December 1958, produced by the Jeanson pro-FLN networks) constituted part of the clandestine press.[59] Sartre's review *Les Temps modernes* continued its former anti-colonial positions, and publishers such as the Éditions de Minuit and François Maspero constantly ran the risk of having their books seized.

The Christian left was another important actor in anti-war activities and humanitarian aid, for example, the newspaper *Témoignage chrétien*, the Catholic review *Esprit*, and the Catholic Mission de France. Some Mission de France priests were active in pro-FLN solidarity networks, and many would prove vital in providing testimonies of police violence against Algerians.[60] The CIMADE (Comité inter-mouvements auprès des évacués), the main Protestant humanitarian organization working with Algerians, became an 'intermediary' between the FLN and the French administration. Other important humanitarian organizations were the Action catholique and the Secours populaire français (SPF), the latter closely linked to the PCF. All of these groups knew of the increasing levels of repression Algerians faced in France. For Sylvie Thénault, metropolitan France was therefore 'both a repressive sphere allied to wartime power and home to a dissident avant-garde', where this avant-garde was marginalized but sufficiently vocal to potentially cause embarrassment to those in power by lifting the veil of silence on repression whenever possible.[61]

CAMPAIGNING AGAINST REPRESSION (1954 TO 1960)

Turning now to the articulation between protests against repression in Algeria with protests in metropolitan France, we will see how, while the two spheres were not identical, in both cases the political context largely predetermined the relative success or failure of such campaigns. From late 1956 onwards, France was the theatre for several campaigns against abuses in Algeria.[62] The Henri Alleg and Maurice Audin affairs that started in 1957 would be powerful subsequent symbols of state repression.[63] The significance of the conflict in Algeria also began

[59] For further details, see Vidal-Naquet, *Mémoires 2*, 85–133; Ulloa, *Francis Jeanson*, 154.

[60] See Sybille Chapeu, *Des Chrétiens dans la guerre d'Algérie: L'Action de la Mission de France* (Paris: Éditions de l'Atelier/Éditions ouvrières, 2004).

[61] Thénault, *Une drôle de justice*, 300.

[62] See Branche, *La Torture*, 147–8; Manceron, *Marianne et les colonies*, 311–12; Vidal-Naquet, *La Torture*, 148.

[63] See Henri Alleg, *La Question* (Paris: Minuit, 1958); Pierre Vidal-Naquet, *L'Affaire Audin (1957–1978)* (Paris: Minuit, 1989; 1st publ. 1958).

to gain greater public attention in France, since it increasingly affected the lives of metropolitan French people outside of the professional army due to the call-up of conscript and reservist soldiers.

Throughout the Algerian War, to have any chance of success, those campaigning against torture and other forms of abuses in Algeria had to instigate campaigns that would have resonance in metropolitan France,[64] and choose their 'symbols' carefully. Cases of mistreatment, torture, other forms of injustice concerning European women and men primarily, and Algerian women secondarily, were more likely to arouse public indignation than those involving Algerian men.[65] The cases of Henri Alleg, Maurice Audin, Djamila Boupacha, and Djamila Bouhired arguably stand out for these reasons. Raphaëlle Branche has highlighted that, in order for there to be an impact, there needed to be a clear testimony by the victim(s), backed up by a competent support network and a skilled legal team. In addition, the revelations needed to occur in a favourable political climate.[66] A specific individual—for example, Djamila Boupacha—who could embody repression gave further momentum.[67]

The real impact of campaigns against torture and other abuses up to 1958 is worth considering. The authorities were capable of deflecting any protest, clamping down on the protestors, and denying the systemic nature of torture or assassination. The case of the Boupacha campaign is interesting since its success (in terms of gaining wide publicity) rested on the evolving political context following the Week of Barricades (24 January to 1 February 1960), involving pro-*Algérie française* mobilizations in Algeria. It also benefited from the ability of the campaigners led by Halimi and De Beauvoir to widen the campaigning issues to include gender equality.[68] However, notwithstanding this undoubtedly high media profile, the Boupacha Committee's efforts led to no conviction nor even trial of any French officers.[69]

Until 1959 with the publication of *La Gangrène*, these campaigns against abuses in Algeria may paradoxically have deflected some of the public attention from repression in metropolitan France. In October 1955, the LDH's Central Committee had protested against 'the measures of police collective coercion that lump together peaceful workers with undesirables and confuse public order with inhumanity'.[70] The sociologist Andrée Michel regretted the extent to which police raids drew a wedge between French and Algerians instead of arousing feelings of solidarity.[71] Important events like the brutal repression of the 9 March 1956 MNA demonstration—during which police opened fire on a peaceful

[64] See Branche, *La Torture*, 383–4.
[65] Ibid.; Thénault, *Une drôle de justice*.
[66] Branche, *La Torture*, 386.
[67] Thénault, *Une drôle de justice*, 75.
[68] Lee Whitfield, 'The French Military under Female Fire: The Public Opinion Campaign and Justice in the Case of Djamila Boupacha, 1960–1962', *Contemporary French Civilization*, 20/1 (1996), 76–90.
[69] Maran, *Torture*, 161–2.
[70] *La Ligue-informations*, 25 (7 Oct. 1955), 2.
[71] Andrée Michel, *Les Travailleurs algériens en France* (Paris: CNRS, 1956), 157.

demonstration against the forthcoming vote of the Special Powers Act—went largely unreported.[72]

Repression of Algerian nationalism in metropolitan France increased as the FLN implanted itself more firmly during 1956–8. The MRAP's newspaper *Droit et liberté* denounced the high levels of repression that pre-existed Papon's return to the Prefecture of police.[73] The MRAP highlighted how some of its own Jewish members had themselves been mistakenly caught up in the police round-ups of Algerians, making the 'community of suffering' with Algerians all the more palpable.[74] Linda Amiri has shown that Papon received personal correspondence that was highly critical of the August 1958 curfew on Algerians. There were protests in the left-wing press about the nature of police operations and conditions of treatment of detainees.[75] The SPF raised concerns in July 1959 that in France the repression had 'taken on major proportions of which most French people remain unaware'.[76] However, the more radically dissident anti-war groups, such as the Trotskyite La Voie communiste, were becoming increasingly critical of what they judged to be PCF inaction in the face of repression, calling in April 1959 for the organization of concrete acts of solidarity with Algerians.[77]

Cases of torture against Algerians in France had first surfaced in October 1958, following revelations that several French worker-priests were suspected of aiding the FLN, after admissions taken from Algerians under torture.[78] Significantly, a January 1959 protest meeting in Paris called for an end to torture 'in Algeria and France', showing recognition that torture had crossed the Mediterranean.[79] In December 1958, cases had emerged of five Algerian students (therefore socially atypical of the vast majority of Algerians in France) from the Union générale des étudiants musulmans algériens (UGEMA) whom the DST had tortured. Published in July 1959, *La Gangrène*, through its high media impact, set up a series of protests that lasted until January 1960.[80]

In addition, several protests attempted to highlight the mass detentions at the CIV and internment camps. On 30 January 1960 there had been a silent march to the CIV 'to protest against torture and the existence of internment camps in Algeria and France'.[81] The Action civique non-violente, which borrowed from US civil rights and protest repertoires inspired by Gandhi, organized a demonstration outside the CIV in April 1960 to highlight the arbitrary nature of administrative internments.[82]

The impact of the campaigns against torture, police repression, and administrative internment that did take place arguably counted for little since levels of

[72] Benjamin Stora, untitled chapter in David Assouline and Mehdi Lallaoui (eds.), *À propos d'octobre 1961* (Bezons: Au nom de la mémoire, 2001), 43–4.

[73] See e.g. 'Positions et témoignages', *Droit et liberté*, 168 (272) (Dec. 1957).

[74] 'Au faciès', *Droit et liberté*, 169 (273) (Jan. 1958), 2.

[75] Amiri, *La Bataille*, 75–7.

[76] *La Défense*, 417 (July 1959), 4–5.

[77] 'D'abord l'Algérie', *La Voie communiste: Bulletin de l'opposition communiste*, 3 (Apr.–May 1959), 2.

[78] Vidal-Naquet, *La Torture*, 104–5.

[79] See Thénault, *Une drôle de justice*, 194.

[80] Ibid. 194–8.

[81] *Témoignages et documents*, 20 (Jan. 1960), 2.

[82] See *La Défense*, 428 (June 1960), 9.

repression—both in France and Algeria—depended on the wider and constantly evolving political context dictating military and policing operations. In metropolitan France, as we saw in previous chapters, the way in which repression operated was in some respects chronologically deferred in relation to repression in Algeria, with the introduction of the *harki* units from March 1960 signalling a further heightening of repression.

A CHANGING DYNAMIC ON THE FRENCH LEFT, SEPTEMBER 1960–AUGUST 1961

To succeed in pressuring governments, anti-colonial groups needed the support of the left. By spring 1960, at least superficially, prospects for such support looked rosier: there is evidence that opposition in France to the war was gaining more ground, although the extent of any deep shift in public opinion remains uncertain. In the period from September 1960 to November 1961, there was arguably an increasing polarization of opinion with larger numbers against the continuation of the war (of which a minority were, in turn, actively against the war's repressive consequences) remaining isolated from the majority of French citizens who trusted de Gaulle to solve the Algerian 'problem'. Furthermore, if the organized left was against the continuation of the war, there was little consensus on Algerian independence, the FLN, de Gaulle, and the question of military service, just as Communist and non-Communist blocs remained largely disunited. The left had taken time to realize the growing strength of the FLN, it did not support the FLN's use of violence, and had initially remained confused by the MNA/FLN rivalry.[83]

A number of wider political events frame this slow evolution on the French left which had been precipitated by the Week of Barricades, the creation of the illegal, violently pro-*Algérie française* OAS, and the first series of negotiations with the GPRA (25–9 June). Autumn 1960 saw the highly public trial in Paris of the Jeanson network.[84] Active since October 1957, this network had been dismantled in January 1960.[85] Lasting almost four weeks, the trial gave an opportunity for the Algerian and French accused and their lawyers to transform the courtroom into a tribune from which to highlight the torture, repression, and censorship practised against Algerians and their French supporters.[86] This highly public spectacle coincided with the single most reported petition of the Algerian War, the *Manifeste des 121 (Délaration sur le droit à l'insoumission dans la guerre d'Algérie)* (121 Manifesto, Declaration on the right not to take up arms in the Algerian War).

[83] See Charles-Robert Ageron, 'Les Français devant la guerre civile algérienne', in Rioux, *La Guerre d'Algérie et les Français*.

[84] Marcel Péju (presented by), *Le Procès du réseau Jeanson* (Paris: La Découverte, 2002; 1st publ. 1961).

[85] See Meynier, *Histoire intérieure*, 480–2.

[86] Vidal-Naquet, *La Torture*, 121.

This manifesto showed the willingness of public figures such as De Beauvoir and Sartre to openly accept soldiers' refusals to take up arms against the FLN. For Martin Evans, 1960 was the first year that we can talk of a resistance movement with its own 'consciousness of collective action and collective identity'.[87] However, if these two important events gave greater publicity to the most radical of French pro-FLN campaigners, they also revealed the ongoing splits within the left on these questions: in particular, between on the one hand what Marcel Péju called the 'respectful left' that refused to go beyond legality and, on the other, the more radical networks or 'disrespectful left'.[88]

The political momentum created by the Jeanson network trial and the 121 Manifesto continued with the student protests of 27 October 1960. Historians of the late-war period underline the extent to which, in the context of a disunited left and one weakened by the new Fifth Republic framework of a strengthened executive at the expense of the legislative, the political initiative moved increasingly away from the main political parties and towards trade unions and younger activists.[89] The 27 October 1960 anti-war meetings and demonstrations initiated by the student union Union nationale des étudiants de France (UNEF), and with the support of the PSU, the Paris-level CFTC trade union (URP-CFTC), the Fédération de l'éducation nationale (FEN) teaching union, Comité Maurice Audin (and, in Paris, the Force ouvrière (FO) trade union) formed a key stage in this process.[90] A sizeable political meeting had finally taken place without the PCF. This renascent dynamism and influence of the non-Communist New Left (*Nouvelle gauche*, made up of the Paris CFTC, and UNEF, PSU, and LDH) requires explanation.

Having previously distanced itself from the pro-FLN UGEMA, the UNEF had changed position during the course of 1960.[91] The UNEF had been undergoing a quiet radicalization under the influence of social Catholicism and due to the government's decision in 1959 to end students' right to delay military service call-up while continuing studies.[92] Also, by late 1960 there was an important new political actor—the PSU—that had emerged in April 1960 as a synthesis of the various non-Communist (notably Socialist) elements of the left that included Michel Rocard and Daniel Mayer who were opposed to Molletist and mainstream left positions on the Algerian War. The PSU, formed as part of the longer term fallout of the 1956 Special Powers vote, proved instrumental in the forging of more anti-war unity.[93] Whilst more radical than the PCF on the question of Algerian independence, the PSU's position was not one of open support for the FLN,

[87] Evans, *Memory of Resistance*, 37.

[88] Péju, 'Une gauche respectueuse', *Les Temps modernes*, 169–70 (April–May 1960), 1512–20.

[89] See Tartakowsky, *Les Manifestations de rue*, 690; Anissa Bouayed, 'La CGT et la Guerre d'Algérie', Ph.D. dissertation (Université de Paris-VII, 1985), ii. 529–35.

[90] On this demonstration, see Heurgon, *Histoire du P.S.U.*, 175–88.

[91] See 'L'UNEF à Tunis: IVè Congrès de l'UGEMA', in *L'Étudiant de France*, 4/22 (Oct. 1960), 9.

[92] Didier Fischer, *L'Histoire des étudiants en France* (Paris: Flammarion, 2001), 210, 234.

[93] See Heurgon, *Histoire du P.S.U.*

but anti-war opposition with a view to toppling the government via unitary protests and wide cooperation wherever possible at local level.[94] However, the PSU lacked mass support beyond teachers, students, and intellectuals.[95]

Another key member of the non-Communist bloc was the Catholic trade union the CFTC. Politically very diverse, on the Algerian question the CFTC nonetheless contained some more radical regional sections (such as Paris) and federations (steelworkers, chemicals industries) in which Algerians were more numerous.[96] These voices were more than counter-balanced by the weight of strongly anti-Communist and anti-FLN centrist or pro-Gaullist majority opinion within the confederation. However, led by Robert Duvivier, over the year from October 1960 to 1961, the moderate left-wing minorities within the CFTC pushing for greater solidarity with Algerians and greater unitary action would gain ground.

With the emergence of greater student protest allied to more assertive non-communist or dissident Communist groupings, the PCF feared losing the political initiative and subsequently wanted to 'fight any attempt to reproduce what happened on 27 October [1960]' when the the non-Communist initiated protests had left the PCF marginalized.[97] It had instructed its Union des étudiants communistes (UEC) members not to attend the 27 October meeting, although many ignored such a warning.[98] After October 1960, the PCF was increasingly for unitary action to force the government to conclude peace, in the hope that, as the main political party, and allied to the largest trade union (CGT), it could only gain strategically from being more proactive. The PCF's shift in position was therefore anything but disinterested.

As Laure Pitti's work on the Boulogne-Billancourt Renault factory has shown, interpreting trade union positions and discourse needs to be done at a variety of levels—workshop, factory, regional, and national—thus making any generalization difficult.[99] While active in defending Algerians and often favourable to Algerian nationalism at Renault Boulogne-Billancourt before March 1956 (often in marked contrast to the PCF line there),[100] the CGT's position nationally since 1956 had largely mirrored the 'wait-and-see' attitude of the PCF. The national CGT leadership had recognized Algerians' right to independence in March 1957.[101] The CGT accepted the need for more active cooperation with the

[94] Position of PSU's National Political Committee, *Tribune Socialiste*, 22 (6 Oct. 1960).

[95] Guy Nania, *Un parti de la gauche: Le PSU* (Paris: Gedalge, 1966), 237, 239.

[96] Michel Branciard, *Un syndicat dans la guerre: La CFTC qui deviendra CFDT* (Paris: Syros, 1984).

[97] PCF Archives, Décisions du secrétariat, Minutes of PCF Secrétariat meeting, 11 Apr. 1961 (no. 879).

[98] Joly, *French Communist Party*, 120. Founded in late 1956, the UEC was 'the most active single body within the Party to campaign against the Algerian War' (ibid. 147).

[99] Pitti, 'Ouvriers algériens'.

[100] Laure Pitti, 'Renault, la "forteresse ouvrière" à l'épreuve de la guerre d'Algérie', *Vingtième siècle: Revue d'histoire*, 83 (July–Sept. 2004), 131–43, 137–8.

[101] Institut d'histoire sociale (IHS), CGT Archives Confédérales, Box 'Algérie', dossier 'Algérie et CGT', Communiqué from CGT, Bureau confédéral 20 Mar. 1957.

CFTC at local (as opposed to national) level in December 1960. Whilst recognizing that capitalist and imperialist exploitation forced Algerians into exile, the CGT was opposed to immigration in that it threatened the interests of the metropolitan French working classes.[102] The FLN's attempts at Renault to link factory-based struggles to the question of Algerian independence—notably using strikes—were often met with suspicion if not hostility by the CGT representatives, the PCF sections, and most of the metropolitan French workforce.[103] Both the CFTC and CGT remained wary about adopting too radical a stance on Algerian independence out of fear of alienating their membership that they judged highly opposed to Algerians. However, other significant factors lessened union radicalism. Until 1961 there is little to suggest that the Algerian question was a priority. The unions would, however, denounce repression and intervene to help Algerian colleagues in danger of disciplinary action or dismissal due to absence from work following arrest or injury by the police. Elsewhere, the Lambertist tendency of the Trotskyite Parti communiste internationaliste was one of the most committed to the cause of Algerian independence.

The late 1960 period therefore saw the emergence of a more powerful *Nouvelle gauche* (PSU, UNEF, Paris CFTC) alongside the Communist pole, a strengthening of the radical anti-colonial movement, and a commensurate weakening (but greater implication) of the Communist pole (PCF, CGT). Further key events marked the left's evolution on Algeria.

First, the left viewed the wide-scale popular Algerian nationalist demonstrations in Algiers (10–11 December 1960) as showing the representative nature of the FLN.[104] For the CGT, for example, 'the latest tragic events in Algeria prove the depth and strength of support that the Algerian masses bring to the national liberation movement'.[105] The security forces (parachutists) harshly repressed these demonstrations, causing at least 120 deaths (the vast majority Algerian). Secondly, the 8 January 1961 referendum on self-determination drove the *Algérie française* activists into entrenched hostility with the Gaullist regime, fostering both the 21 April 1961 attempted putsch and, in response, a revival of an anti-fascist discourse on the left last seen in 1958. Henceforth, the left's tactic was to encourage greater unity to force de Gaulle to negotiate a settlement with the GPRA, based on the premise that a continuation of war strengthened the dangers of a slide into fascism.[106] With the GPRA now considered by the left as representative of the majority of Algerians, a series of rapprochements took place in spring 1961 between both the CGT and CFTC

[102] Léon Gani, *Syndicats et travailleurs immigrés* (Paris: Éditions sociales, 1972), 53–6.

[103] Pitti, 'Ouvriers algériens'.

[104] Meynier, *Histoire intérieure*, 465–7. Henceforth, many Algerians in France wanted to emulate the political success of the Algiers demonstrations, placing added pressure on the FLN leadership before 17 Oct. 1961.

[105] IHS, CGT Archives Confédérales, Box 'Algérie', Dossier 'Algérie et CGT', Communiqué from Bureau confédéral CGT, 12 Dec.1960.

[106] See Heurgon, *Histoire du P.S.U.*, 306–7.

and the UGTA (Union générale des travailleurs algériens), and UGEMA.[107] All political actors from January 1961 onwards appeared to be in an end-of-war logic. However, as we have seen, a context in which there appeared to be conditions favourable for a negotiated settlement was paradoxically to lead to heightened repression.

Beyond the Algerian communities and French support networks, the realization that levels of anti-Algerian repression were increasing in metropolitan France only received wider national public commentary with the anti-*harki* campaigns of March 1961. Before that, there had been a first flurry of denunciations of the FPA's activities on 29 April 1960 when anti-war groups in the 13th arrondissement had exposed FPA activity there, on the same day as Claude Bourdet raised *harki* activities at the Conseil municipal. As we saw in Chapter 2, there was an increase in *harki* violence during 1960, that peaked in March–April 1961, and that gave rise to a campaign against torture. By this time, the question of the FPA was receiving some attention within the highest echelons of the PCF that called on the Party's local cells to initiate anti-*harki* action.[108] The local Paris CGT newspaper described what it termed 'the regime of terror' that Algerian workers in France faced.[109] However, with the exception of the most radical anti-war groups such as Jeune Résistance which called, under the title 'Harkis = SS', for demonstrations outside buildings where the FPA operated,[110] there seems to have been a loss of momentum in protests against police violence in central Paris after May 1961. Several cases outside the Paris region attracted attention, most notably the deadly collective attacks (*ratonnades*) against North Africans in Metz on 21 July 1961 by off-duty parachutists.[111]

In Algeria, meanwhile, the 5 July 1961 demonstrations throughout the country once again aimed to show the unity of the Algerian people behind the GPRA. As in December 1960, these protests ended in violent repression.[112] Two recent examples (December 1960 and July 1961) of security force repression of Algerian nationalist demonstrations were therefore highly visible in the minds of the left in autumn 1961. However, what struck the PCF in particular was not so much the high levels of repression but the genuine popular enthusiasm for Algerian independence amongst Algerians.

[107] IHS, CGT Archives Confédérales, Box 'Algérie', Dossier 'Algérie et CGT', joint CGT, UGEMA, UGTA declarations of Feb. and July 1961. The UGTA was founded in 1956 after the Special Powers vote.

[108] PCF Archives, Décisions du Secrétariat, no. 877, 5 Apr. 1961 (p. 1) and no. 882, 18 Apr. 1961 (p. 2).

[109] 'Contre la répression policière, solidarité aux travailleurs algériens', *Le Travailleur parisien*, NS 36 (17 Mar. 1961), 2.

[110] No. 4 (July 1961), 3–4. There is little evidence that such calls were heeded.

[111] See *La Ligue-informations*, 12/16 (26 July 1961) and Manceron and Remaoun, *D'une rive à l'autre*, 171.

[112] See Mann, 'Les Manifestations'.

THE FLN AND THE FRENCH LEFT

Before seeing how the FLN, the UGTA, and AGTA (Amicale générale des travailleurs algériens) judged the levels of support offered by the left over the period since 1956,[113] it is necessary to consider an often under-studied dynamic: there was considerable and long-lasting tension between FLN leaders in France concerning the amount of effort to deploy towards French public opinion. As part of the FLN Fédération de France (FF-FLN) Federal committee between June 1957 and September 1958, Mohammed Harbi had been for the creation of an anti-colonialist front between Algerians, other colonized workers, and the French workers' movement.[114] According to Harbi, these proposals stemmed from a strategy that knew the war would last a long time, should be motivated by political rather than military considerations, and that 'aimed to remove Algerians from the isolation (*ghetto*) in which they risked finding themselves' in France if Algerian and French forces were in two clearly defined blocs.[115] Given that Harbi left the French FLN Federation in September 1958 (his suggestions had already been rejected in 1957), the question of the FLN's attitude and discourse towards both the French left and French public opinion, and the effects this policy had, remains uncertain.[116] As Harbi has also pointed out, the success of any policy aiming to construct a Franco-Algerian anti-colonial front was also dependent on the receptiveness or otherwise of French political parties and trade unions to the FLN's arguments.[117]

Many on the French left probably did not realize that Algerians often remembered left-wing relative inaction against previous (and ongoing) atrocities Algerians had suffered in France or Algeria, or lack of French support for Algerian nationalism.[118] Mostefa Lacheraf has highlighted the suspicion some Algerians had of French trade union motives in metropolitan France, since their experiences of the main confederations in Algeria, which were dominated by European workers, had not been positive.[119] Interestingly, however, Algerian nationalist discourses (here FLN, UGTA, AGTA) were usually careful not to essentialize

[113] The AGTA had been founded in 1957 and aimed to bring Algerian workers in France closer to the FLN, but was not strictly speaking a trade union. Although banned in 1958 it continued a clandestine role, being the 'equivalent' in France of the UGTA.

[114] See Harbi's *Une vie debout*, 215–18. Harbi was head of the FF-FLN Press and Information Commission during that period.

[115] See *Sou'al*, 7 (Sept. 1987), 'Interview de Mohammed Harbi', 7–17, 13.

[116] Zahir Ihadden argues that the FLN did not consider propaganda addressed to French people as a priority: 'La Propagande du FLN pendant la guerre de libération nationale', in Ageron, *La Guerre d'Algérie et les Algériens*, 189.

[117] Mohammed Harbi, 'Le FLN et l'opinion française', in Rioux, *La guerre d'Algérie et les Français*, 52.

[118] Bouayed, 'La CGT et la Guerre d'Algérie', i. 110.

[119] Mostefa Lacheraf, Preface to Boualem Bourouiba, *Les Syndicalistes algériens: Leur Combat, de l'éveil à la libération* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 1998), 9–31.

all French people as hostile to their aims, and to praise those that gave practical as opposed to verbal support whether on an individual or collective basis. The FF-FLN and AGTA publications were keen to highlight areas of common interest between French and Algerians (e.g. defence of human dignity, refusal of colonial oppression) as a way of inciting greater transversal support.[120]

Pro-FLN publications addressed to French trade unions, newspapers, and anti-war groups judged that there had been insufficient solidarity from the French left, invoking both indifference and passivity to explain this. A communiqué of 17 May 1958 (therefore immediately prior to Harbi's leaving the FF-FLN) judged that the trade unions and parties of the left should have done more to help the FLN and spoke of the need for the French anti-colonial movement and Algerian emigration to join together.[121] In July 1959, the UGTA newspaper spoke of the 'feebleness of the political organizations and the passivity of the popular masses that unfortunately characterize the French left at the moment'.[122] Addressing itself to the French workforce, an article in May 1960 complained that every time it had broached the question of Algerian independence in the past, 'you came up with umpteen reasons in an attempt to justify not so much your passivity, but your indifference'. Now, the article continued, what was needed was for French workers 'to show unequivocally both solidarity with us and opposition to the War'.[123] In August 1960, the FF-FLN published a brochure entitled 'French people, do you know? The daily lives of Algerian workers' (*Français, le savez-vous? La vie quotidienne des travailleurs algériens*) in which it detailed the high levels of repression inflicted on Algerians and argued that the French population approved of the repression. It praised those acts of solidarity from French people towards Algerians but judged them 'unfortunately rare'.[124]

In spring 1961, there appears to have been growing frustration by the AGTA at the French left that was still calling more for 'Peace in Algeria' than for independence. The May–June 1961 edition of its *L'Ouvrier algérien en France* regretted that the repression was once more bearing down on Algerians while French workers kept within a complicitous silence or indifference.[125] A note from the SCAA's Director (dated 23 August 1961) highlighted that the FLN wanted to isolate itself more than previously from the trade unions, PCF, humanitarian organizations, and official social agencies to better 'keep Algerians in total political and social unity'.[126] Thus, before September 1961, the FLN was under no illusions regarding the left's willingness to engage in mass protests against repression or for Algerian

[120] See e.g. FLN *Appel aux Français*, 17 Oct. 1959, reproduced in *L'Ouvrier algérien*, NS 9 (Nov. 1959), 7.

[121] FLN communiqué of 17 May 1958, in *FLN-Documents: Édités par la Fédération de France du FLN*, 1 (Jan. 1959), 6 (Bibliothèque nationale de France, 4-Lc12–463).

[122] *L'Ouvrier algérien*, NS 5 (July 1959), 3.

[123] *L'Ouvrier algérien*, NS 15 (May 1960), 1–2.

[124] 15 pp., 13, 4 (BDIC Nanterre, O pièce 365 Rés.).

[125] 'La répression en France', 4/4 (May–June 1961), 3.

[126] APP-HA88, *Sur un changement d'orientation de la tactique du FLN*.

independence, just as there were reduced possibilities, from the FLN's perspective, for any 'bridge-building' with the organized left.[127] In addition, relations between the French supporters' networks and the FLN hierarchy were far from devoid of tension. The FLN was keen to maintain firm control on those who worked with it, and such support had always to be on the FLN's terms, with no policy input from the *porteurs de valises*. By 1961, the FF-FLN was prioritizing individual support to avoid (for example) French activists subsuming work for the FLN within a wider revolutionary agenda.[128]

METROPOLITAN PUBLIC OPINION

The question of public opinion has occupied a central place in competing interpretations of the left's role in the war. One of the main reasons invoked by the PCF for its own inaction was that French public opinion was not ready for the PCF to prioritize the question of Algerian independence or to oppose anti-Algerian repression, due to working-class racism. This was a key source of contention with the more radical anti-colonialists who argued that the PCF should take the lead and attempt to influence such opinion.[129] Another question relates to how much Parisians knew of the anti-Algerian repression, at what point, and through which channels, so that we can assess the impact of campaigning against repression.

Studies on French public opinion have arguably tended to neglect the evolution of working-class opinion.[130] Charles-Robert Ageron has successfully attempted to widen the question by using public opinion surveys, although such surveys centred on attitudes toward Algerian independence.[131] It is difficult to correlate this general evolution favourable to an end to the war with any willingness to challenge the levels of repression faced by Algerians in France.

The conseillers techniques aux affaires musulmanes (CTAM), working from the Préfecture de la Seine, wrote quarterly reports on the state of French attitudes towards Algerians. Reports written in early 1961 suggest that Algerian men enjoyed few social relations with French people outside the workplace.[132] Writing in the MRAP's newspaper, Pierre Renier judged in March 1961 that, 'poisoned by insidiously racist propaganda, public opinion is unfortunately not interested in these problems [*those faced by Algerians due to repression*], and views Algerians with hostility'.[133] There were therefore high levels of French hostility to Algerians

[127] On this, see MacMaster and House, 'La Fédération de France'.

[128] See document *Du bon usage des porteurs de valises*, dated 8 Sept. 1961, signed 'Maurice' (i.e. Zouaoui), Comité fédéral of FF-FLN, reproduced in Mohammed Harbi and Gilbert Meynier, *Le FLN: Documents et histoire* (Paris: Fayard, 2004), 688.

[129] Jeanson, *Notre guerre*, 80–1.

[130] But see Pitti, 'Ouvriers algériens'.

[131] Charles-Robert Ageron, 'L'Opinion française à travers les sondages', in Rioux, *La Guerre d'Algérie et les Français*.

[132] AN (CARAN), F1a 5014, *Synthèse des rapports trimestriels établis par les CTAM* (Premier trimestre 1961), 35.

[133] *Droit et liberté*, 198 (Mar. 1961).

during 1961—and this within all social groups. If French public opinion was increasingly in favour of an end to the war, and displayed a frustration that such a pointless war should continue to cause French casualties, it was certainly not favourable to Algerians. More generally, Claire Mauss-Copeaux has highlighted a 'blotting out' of the war and its consequences among public opinion at the time.[134] In addition, the FLN's response to police repression in the form of armed attacks on police officers from late August 1961 onwards not only reinforced popular hostility to Algerians but also drew considerable criticism from the anti-colonialists who could not understand why the FLN did not always target those police officers most responsible for repression.

To summarize the analysis thus far, contesting state repression remained a politically marginal activity,[135] undertaken by numerically small groups, often addressing or reaching the converted few. Campaigning had not enabled a realization of the widespread extent of such abuses, their inter-relatedness (systemic nature), their motivation (counter-revolutionary warfare), and impact on Algerians' daily lives. The dominant version of the war propagated by the state and right-wing media and other colonial discourses presented Algerians as a collective danger and the Paris police as the victims, never the perpetrators, of terror.[136] Official tactics (seizure, censorship, general intimidation) compromised the usual repertoires of intellectual intervention employed by opposition groups predicated upon freedom of expression and protest.[137] In this respect, opposition campaigning inherited the effects of decades of relatively successful manipulation of metropolitan public opinion just as it faced exacerbated levels of anti-Algerian hostility or indifference due to the war situation. The French authorities were fighting a war that 'dare not speak its name' with methods that similarly could not be divulged, and opposition groups were reduced to a reactive role, gathering testimonies after each instance of brutality rather than employing a pre-emptive mode of intervention. In addition, there was a complex dialectic involved in the openness or closure of the Algerian communities as part of the fight for independence. Whilst the strategic use of the shanty towns and hostels constituted an important resource in the nationalist struggle, it also enabled greater police repression well out of the gaze of the vast majority of the French population, as we saw in Part I.

As a result, few French people probably therefore knew the extent of levels of repression in the summer 1961. At least some of the incredulity from French people when hearing about anti-Algerian violence must have been in good faith. For example, a French motorist who found an Algerian man lying by a suburban road suggested, on hearing that the Algerian had been seriously assaulted, that she drive him to the nearest police station. The motorist did not imagine that the police could have caused the Algerian's injuries, and for obvious reasons,

[134] Mauss-Copeaux, *Appelés en Algérie*. [135] Vidal-Naquet, *La Torture*, 143–4.
[136] Ibid. 155–6. [137] Heymann, *Les Libertés publiques*, 130–2, 228–37.

the injured Algerian would not have offered this information.[138] Those worker-priests and social workers in regular contact with Algerians faced genuine disbelief when trying to convince French people of the extent of terror visited on Algerians from 1960 onwards.[139] Such activists were acutely aware of their relative marginalization and the consequent under-exposure of their views. The vast majority of Parisians simply did not understand the lived experience of Algerians and, after seven years at war, few were willing to make the effort to do so.

[138] Anonymous public testimony by an Algerian resident of Clichy, victim of this attack in Oct.1961 (public meeting of Association La Maison de l'Algérie, Saint-Ouen, 22 Oct. 2002, attended by J.H.).

[139] Telephone conversation (J.H.) with Monique Hervo, 11 July 2003.

8

Fragmented Reactions to State Violence, September–November 1961

Analysts have tended to assume that, because the events of 17 October soon largely disappeared from political and media debate, this must have been because there had been few protest reactions at the time. As we shall see, the picture in late 1961 was rather more complex, with the tensions and power relations already highlighted in the previous chapter resulting in the marginalization of the FLN, a fragmented left, and public opinion hostile to Algerians. The analysis now turns to the impact of these factors on the forms and levels of reactions to anti-Algerian repression that culminated on 17 October.

REACTIONS TO POLICE VIOLENCE, SEPTEMBER–17 OCTOBER 1961

Responses from humanitarian organizations, left-wing municipalities, the CFTC and CGT show awareness that repression in the Paris area increased from August 1961, but such responses were mostly low-key. To voice their concerns over the almost uncontrollable proportions police violence had reached, a CIMADE delegation, led by Jacqueline Peyron, went to the Préfecture de Police on 6 October. The delegation explained what had happened to Benhalima Yahiaoui and an unnamed fellow Algerian friend of his at the hands of the police in the Bois de Vincennes (27–8 September) following these two mens' arrest in the 13th arrondissement. In response, the CIMADE's police interlocutor stated that, given the extremely tense situation at the Prefecture of Police, 'he fears the worst. There is currently an increasingly widespread settling of scores by police on random Algerians. He said that Monsieur Yahiaoui had been lucky not to have been killed in the Bois de Vincennes as often happens.'[1]

Why did humanitarian organizations—well aware for many months of the nature and levels of police brutalities—not seek to publicize this violence more

[1] CIMADE Archives, DZ. 06(V)3, 'Tortures, violences policières ou militaires (en Algérie et en France) dont répression manifestation Paris 17 10 1961', *Rapport de la délégation du Service nord-africain, 06 octobre 1961*.

vociferously? Such organizations' credibility rested upon their ability to retain an image of political impartiality. In the highly polarized political context of autumn 1961, any public denunciation of police activities would have exposed such organizations to highly damaging accusations and risked the CIMADE losing its right of access to internment centres.

Police violence from August 1961, as we have seen, probably deepened more in the working-class suburbs.[2] The earliest reactions to this increase came from left-wing suburban municipalities that saw numerous protests against the FPA, such as those by the Communist mayors of Nanterre and Saint-Denis after raids from the FPA's Noisy base into their respective areas.[3] On 5 October, there was a street protest in Ivry against FPA violence.[4] There were other suburban protests: on 10 October the AGTA, in an open letter to French political parties, trade unions, the press, and human rights associations, appealed for far more consequential opposition than previously against repression, whilst also praising those in suburban Puteaux, Saint-Denis, Nanterre, and Aubervilliers who had shown their 'indignation'.[5]

The AGTA's appeal also stated that racist attacks on Algerians in Algeria (*ratonnades*) that had previously been reserved to the 'racists and ultras of Bab El Oued and Clos-Salembier, are becoming commonplace in the Paris region'. The AGTA accused in the strongest terms elements of French public opinion of encouraging 'genocide' against Algerians due to its silence and indifference.[6] While this document did not only appeal to the trade unions, its writers would have been aware that, in terms of leading French public opinion, the unions, along with the PCF, were the main actors. As we saw in Chapter 7, the AGTA—essentially the FLN's 'relay'[7] in relation to the French trade union movement—had already attempted to sensitize the left to police violence. This 10 October appeal, sent in conjunction with the decision to organize the 17 October demonstrations, came after the open letter the AGTA had already published on 8 September requesting trade union help to stop deportations to Algeria.[8]

The local Paris CFTC leadership (URP-CFTC) was aware of the increasing levels of police violence via testimonies forwarded to the higher union echelons once the summer holidays ended and French workers were informed of what was going on by their Algerian co-workers.[9] Its responses, and those of the CGT, show the internal and external tensions informing union action at this point, provide an interesting complementary view on the question of public opinion, and reveal how the anti-fascist theme was gaining ground before 17 October.

[2] Einaudi, *La Bataille de Paris*, 74–9.
[3] Amiri, *La Bataille*, 121–2.
[4] *L'Humanité* (6 Oct. 1961).
[5] ACON CFTC Archives, 1F 1187, Fédération unifiée des Industries chimiques CFTC, *Lettre ouverte de l'AGTA*, 2 pp., 1, 2.
[6] *Lettre ouverte de l'AGTA*, in *Le Monde* (13 Oct. 1961).
[7] Pitti, Ouvriers algériens, 449.
[8] ACON CFTC Archives, Fédération nationale de la Métallurgie CFTC, 1B 340, dossier 'Algérie: AGTA'.
[9] Branciard, *Un syndicat dans la guerre*, 268–90.

The CFTC's Confederal Council on 29 September had heard a lengthy report from full-time CFTC officials saying that violence from the FLN in metropolitan France, in particular Paris, 'strikes public opinion much more than the scale of the repression against FLN terrorism that is currently developing against Algerians in France, of which public opinion remains largely unaware.'[10] This statement does not indicate that the national CFTC leadership had grasped the collective nature of police repression. On 13 October, the CFTC's Confederal Bureau discussed the ongoing situation. Its secretariat then published a press release on 14 October, describing the 'exceptional extent' of police repression. The CFTC expressed fears that the situation in France was degenerating into communal violence on the scale seen in Algeria.[11]

The URP-CFTC under Robert Duvivier, which was more left-wing than the CFTC national leadership, was becoming increasingly concerned by the high levels of violence, be that from the OAS, the French state, or the FLN. In a key document, the URP-CFTC framed its analysis of police violence within a preoccupation with the evolution of the metropolitan French political context, which it saw as resembling a ' "legal dictatorship" '. Fearing a possible coup d'état and a slide into fascism, the URP-CFTC recommended that its union activists sensitize rank-and-file workers to the political risks and fight racism within the membership.[12] For the URP-CFTC, the erosion of Algerians' rights could prefigure those of 'other citizens' and union activists.[13] The URP-CFTC used anti-fascist themes to incite greater transversal political action from the French towards Algerians by explaining police anti-Algerian violence as emanating from an anti-democratic state gangrened by the war. Such a state therefore posed a possible threat to everyone, as did the OAS. These themes potentially drew in those French workers whom the CFTC recognized as being hostile to Algerians. As Laure Pitti has shown, this was a rhetorical strategy used by both the CGT and the CFTC throughout the Algerian War and tended to avoid the thornier question of the importance of and justification for Algerian independence, using instead the themes of 'Peace in Algeria'.[14]

The URP-CFTC's newspaper *Paris-Syndical* carried a communiqué dated 4 October denouncing police repression and calling on workers to inform the union of any police abuses they witnessed and to show solidarity towards Algerians, even if it meant exposing themselves to danger.[15] However, unlike the

[10] ACON CFTC Archives, Syndicat général de l'Éducation nationale (SGEN) 1147, 'Guerre d'Algérie (1957–1960)', *Rapport présenté au Conseil confédéral du 29 septembre 1961 (CFTC Secteur politique)*, 13 pp., 3.

[11] ACON CFTC Archives Confédérales, 6 H 23, 'Positions confédérales et contacts avec AGTA, 1960, UGTA, 1961', dossier '1961: Positions CFTC', Communiqué 15, 14 Oct. 1961.

[12] URP-CFTC Archives, Box 59, dossier 'URP Circulaires—tracts septembre–décembre 1961', *Face au racisme: Note d'information* 10, 28 Sept. 1961, 4 pp., 1, 3.

[13] *Face au racisme*, 2.

[14] Pitti, 'Ouvriers algériens', 424–6.

[15] No. 7, Sept.–Oct. 1961, p. 3, in ACON CFTC Archives Confédérales, 6 H 24, 'Action pour la paix, CFTC et autres organisations. 1961', dossier '1 novembre. Journée d'action'.

CGT, the CFTC, whilst represented in some industrial sectors where Algerians were numerous (e.g. chemicals, iron and steel), enjoyed little mass working-class support.

At the Renault car factory at Boulogne-Billancourt, where some 3,000 Algerians were employed in late 1961, and where the FLN, via the AGTA, was particularly solidly implanted, there had been a CGT delegation on 5 October to Boulogne town hall to protest against the harassment of Algerians by police outside the Renault factory. The CGT union was seeking to centralize Algerians' testimonies of police brutalities and publicized these at a press conference on 4 October.[16] On 13 October, there were joint CFTC and CGT protests at Renault against police operations, with petitions sent to the Élysée.[17] The Paris-level CGT newspaper, under the title 'Savage repression against Algerian workers', stated on 29 September that 'Our honour as French workers demands we react swiftly and dynamically' in the face of such repression, and that workers should follow up absences of Algerian workers who may have been detained or worse.[18] It is unclear how far such calls were heeded.

Furthermore, larger scale unitary trade union responses (e.g. those beyond the factory level) against repression were limited because of the ongoing strategic tensions between the CGT and the CFTC. For example, after its meeting on 5 October 1961, the local CGT-UD (Union départementale) Seine Bureau decided to call for a meeting amongst the main trade unions to discuss the growing repression.[19] To this effect, the CGT-UD Seine's Eugène Hénaff contacted the Paris-level leaders of other unions (URP-CFTC, FO, UNEF). Hénaff stated that he had lost count of the cases of police brutality, and judged that police operations 'have more to do with terror than repression'.[20] The CFTC archives shed little light on why it did not join this initiative, although there would have been suspicion that the CGT would be the dominant 'partner' in any such action.

THE FLN, THE PCF, FRENCH PUBLIC OPINION, AND THE 17 OCTOBER DEMONSTRATIONS

If the demonstrations of 17 October aimed to send a message to the French government, they also constituted a wider appeal to both international opinion and French society. The Comité fédéral (CF) in Germany was acutely aware that French public opinion was against the FLN but that efforts needed to be made to

[16] APP-HA110, report of 4 Oct. 1961. See *L'Humanité* (6 Oct. 1961) which records this press conference.

[17] *L'Humanité* (13 Oct. 1961).

[18] *Le Travailleur parisien*, NS 51 (29 Sept. 1961), 7. Emphasis in the original.

[19] Archives départementales de la Seine-Saint-Denis (ADSSD), CGT-UD Seine, 49 J 48, *Procès-verbaux Bureau UD Seine 1959–1966*, 261, meeting of 5 Oct. 1961.

[20] ADSSD, CGT-UD Seine, 49 J 485, *Manifestation des Algériens en France, 17 octobre 1961*, dossier 'Correspondance suite au 17/10/1961', letter to other unions.

change this.[21] Haroun had written to Zouaoui on 10 October, stating that 'we absolutely must change direction and bring public opinion back round to us' in order to force withdrawl of the curfew.[22] Zouaoui had envisaged, if not a joint FLN–French left protest, at least some French participation on the planned demonstration. In his note to Haroun of 7 October, Zouaoui had stated that:

> here in Paris we must *put the French people up against the wall*. The French political parties and trade unions will 'advise' their activists to come out in as high a number as possible from 8.30pm onwards to mingle if needed with the peaceful Algerians as they are marching and intervene where necessary against police provocation,

showing the anticipation of repression and the need for protection.[23] However, the very way in which this suggestion was phrased indicates Zouaoui's view of relations between the FLN on the one hand, and the PCF and CGT on the other by this point.[24]

Indeed, given this necessity to 'force' the French into participation, it remains unclear how realistic the idea of any PCF/CGT participation could have been. Solicited by both Abdelkrim Souici and then Omar Boudaoud of the CF to be an intermediary with the PCF,[25] Omar Ouhadj, head of the AGTA, did not believe that French cooperation would be forthcoming. Ouhadj based his judgement on many years (since 1952) at the Renault car factory at Boulogne-Billancourt where, since 1956, relations with the PCF had been extremely tense.[26] Ouhadj knew 'from experience that these organizations would not participate given their inability to mobilize on a mass scale'.[27] The exact details of the discussions between the FLN and the PCF remain unclear.[28] Nevertheless, Ouhadj was proved correct, since while both FLN (and also the PCF) may have wanted some cooperation concerning this planned series of demonstrations, according to Omar Boudaoud, neither side could agree on the form this cooperation might take. On either the 15 or 16 October 1961, two leading members of the PCF, Léon Feix and Étienne Fajon, met with the head of the CF, Omar Boudaoud, in Brussels. The FF-FLN—and Boudaoud in particular—had judged severely the PCF's reluctance to support independence (as opposed to 'Peace') in Algeria. PCF and FF-FLN differences apparently centred on whether there would be participation of Communist women on either the demonstrations or the day after. For Boudaoud, the PCF's offer of support was too late to forge closer ties after years of what the FLN considered betrayal.[29]

The PCF's motives for such a meeting and any putative cooperation with the FLN remain equally unclear. As we saw previously, since the December 1960 and

[21] *Sou'al*, 7 (Sept. 1987), 82 (Haroun to Zouaoui). [22] *Sou'al*, 7 (Sept. 1987), 77.
[23] *Sou'al*, 7 (Sept. 1987), 74 (Zouaoui to Haroun), 7 Oct. 1961. The italics figure in the printed version. [24] See MacMaster and House, 'La Fédération de France'.
[25] Einaudi, *Octobre 1961*, 158–9, interview with Omar Ouhadj, 7 Feb. 1992.
[26] Pitti, Ouvriers algériens, 344, 454–5.
[27] Omar Ouhadj, letter to Jim House, 17 Dec. 2004.
[28] See House and MacMaster, 'La Fédération de France', 154–5.
[29] Einaudi, *Octobre 1961*, 159–60, interview with Omar Boudaoud, 25 Feb. 1992.

July 1961 popular urban demonstrations in Algeria, the PCF considered the GPRA as the sole legitimate interlocutor of the French state. However, the PCF had previously shrunk from any direct association with the FLN. The PCF was unlikely to have agreed to support a political initiative of which the FLN (or any other party or movement) had control. For example, a tract by the PCF's section at Renault (Boulogne-Billancourt) stated that, while it supported the struggle of the Algerian people, 'a great party like ours cannot subordinate its fight to the FLN's action and objectives'.[30] In addition, the Party had largely dropped central Paris demonstrations from its campaigning repertoire.[31] Given the lack of agreement between the PCF and FLN, the presence of French pro-FLN sympathizers such as Georges Mattéi, Georges Lepage, Clara and Henri Benoîts on the 17 October demonstrations therefore appears as a 'fall-back' position by the FLN.[32] Furthermore, the main logistical preparation for the demonstration came from a network operated by Zouaoui in conjunction with many French supporters acting on an individual basis. Boudaoud had deliberately sought French support from those activists who were not part of organized networks, who would stay out of politics and provide only technical assistance under FLN orders.[33]

The FLN's strategy was to impress the French population by the show of unity and, on the strength of this initiative, appeal for more broad-based support immediately after the event, which, as we have seen, was part of the first stage in a series of mobilizations. The FLN wanted total 'ownership' of the 17 October demonstration itself to reap all the political benefits. In his letter to Zouaoui of 10 October, Haroun had stipulated that during the first phase of protests (including 17 October), the boycott would be supported by a widely distributed leaflet explaining the FLN's position and denouncing the 'racist curfew' and repression in Paris. During the second phase of protests throughout France, further measures would be taken to explain the FLN's position to political parties, unions, and left-wing personalities, 'to ask them for the appropriate support'.[34] At least two AGTA publications (dated 10 and 12 October respectively) were therefore sent to French trade unions, left-wing parties, humanitarian, and anti-racist organizations.[35] Calling on French support, the *Déclaration du FLN sur la répression et les mesures racistes dans la région parisienne* ('FLN Declaration on repression and the racist measures in the Paris region'), dated 17 October 1961, but written in advance, said that the French media and public opinion had accepted the police version of FLN violence.[36]

[30] 'Déjouer les manœuvres et développer l'action unie pour la PAIX en ALGÉRIE', PCF Fédération Seine-Ouest, Section Renault, 17 Feb. 1961 (document kindly provided by Omar Ouhadj).

[31] Tartakowsky, *Les Manifestations de rue*, 692.

[32] See the respective descriptions by Georges Mattéi and Clara and Henri Benoîts in Le Cour Grandmaison, *Le 17 octobre 1961*, 27–30, 32–5.

[33] See MacMaster and House, 'La Fédération de France'.

[34] *Sou'al*, 7 (Sept. 1987), letter of 10 Oct. 1961, 76.

[35] The 10 October tract (cf. below) is in ACON CFTC, 1F 1187, Fédération unifiée des Industries chimiques CFTC. The 12 Oct. tract is in APP-H1B20.

[36] APP-HA110, 'Déclaration du FLN à la presse le 17 octobre 1961', 4 pp.

Social movement theory tells us that mobilizations of socially marginalized groups need support from other groups that can often serve as moral and physical protection against state repression.[37] In October 1961 that support was clearly absent. The 17 October demonstrations were emblematic of the isolation of the FLN within French society, and within all but a fraction of the French left. However, there is some evidence of a policy of 'isolationism' by the FLN toward the PCF in particular, the direct result of the long-standing disappointment that previous lack of support from the PCF (i.e. beyond legal and humanitarian aid) had fostered amongst key Algerian nationalists, a sign of the complex dialectic between the FLN and the PCF.

AFTER 17 OCTOBER 1961

The behaviour of French people on the night of 17 October did not augur well for future protests. Anti-war activists highlighted the levels of complicity between Parisians and police: bystanders helped police to hunt down Algerians attempting to escape, and some bus and train drivers warned the police in advance they were carrying Algerian passengers. Just as shocking to the activists was the indifference of other Parisians, who looked on without intervening, as seriously wounded Algerians lay inanimate on pavements.[38] However, FLN reports after 17 October also show that a tiny minority of French bystanders engaged in acts of micro-resistance, shouting at police attacking Algerians, showing Algerians how to escape from police cordons, giving them money to take taxis to safety, providing rudimentary medical care, and, in some instances, taking them into their flats for safety (see Photo 5).[39] The discussion now examines the extent such individual acts of protest, of solidarity, or compassion from French people, would become collective given polarized public opinion and the ongoing tensions already outlined between mainstream and radical anti-colonial left, between the FLN and the mainstream left, and between the Communists and non-Communists.

By 19 October, it was starting to emerge that the demonstrations had been largely peaceful. By 23 October, even *Le Figaro* was pointing up the inconsistencies in the official versions. After the first few days (18–21 October), the extent of the police violence therefore began to surface outside the localities in which Algerians lived. Opposition and trade unions provided testimonies forming 'counter-knowledge' that undermined the official version. How likely were such alternative, critical press representations to affect public opinion? The idea that

[37] See Johanna Siméant, *La Cause des sans-papiers* (Paris: Presses de Sciences-Po, 1998).

[38] See the tract by the Fédération des Groupes d'Études de Lettres (21 Oct. 1961) in APP-HA110, 'Manifestations du 17–20 octobre 1961. Rapports de la police municipale: 18 octobre–20 novembre 1961'.

[39] APP-H1B35, 'Manifestation du 17 octobre 1961', 'Rapports des responsables', No. 11, *Rapport sur les manifestations du 17 au 20 octobre 1961* and No. 1112321, *Rapport sur la manifestation du 17 octobre 1961.*

these press revelations and campaigns had some, limited impact is supported by the larger number of protests after 17 October in relation to previous police violence against Algerians since 1954. The time-scale of such protests articulates closely with that of the press and political campaigns, with the majority of protests (especially in Paris) occurring after 20 October. For analytical purposes, it is possible to separate public opinion into three groups from 17 October to 17 November 1961. First, there was the very small minority of French people who witnessed what had happened on 17 October or who were close enough to Algerians (personally, professionally, or politically) to know almost straightaway what had occurred. Second, there was a larger, yet numerically limited group of French people who came to hold a more critical view of the police action after the press revelations. These people arguably constituted a 'second wave' of protestors and petition-signers in the ensuing two weeks (e.g. from 21 October) mobilized on anti-fascist, or moral anti-racist and humanitarian themes.

However, a third group—by far the majority—believed the official versions from the start. Assumptions about Algerians' supposed aggressive nature formed the interpretational repertoire of most media perceptions of Algerians: this made the official versions of FLN attacks on police credible. Other Parisians viewed police violence as justified and exculpated by reference to FLN armed attacks on the police.[40] Some witnesses, such as Clara and Henri Benoîts, found many of their colleagues at Renault largely unmoved by the repression.[41] In addition, most mass publications (*Le Parisien Libéré, L'Aurore, Paris-Match*) reproduced official versions.[42] The most critical newspapers were *L'Humanité* and *Libération*, although *L'Humanité* did not report the violence of 17 October on the front page on 18 October.[43] In this highly polarized political atmosphere, there was therefore a limit to how far social protests and the raising of awareness could go.

The centrist, left-wing, parallel, and underground press all interpreted the repression of 17 October within many of the existing themes regarding state violence towards Algerians, while their differences in interpretation further revealed the fractured ideological terrain on the left.[44] On the moderate and centre-left, journalists and politicians lay some of the responsibility at the door of the FLN for having organized the demonstration.[45] However, Emmanuel d'Astier de la Vigerie criticized papers such as *Le Monde* and *France-Soir* that (initially, at least) placed causality at the FLN's door. For d'Astier de la Vigerie, the origin of such violence was colonization itself, and Algerians had moved from 'from passive to active resistance and terrorism'.[46]

[40] See Gaïti, 'Les Ratés de l'histoire'.

[41] See Levine, *Les Ratonnades d'octobre*, 120–6. Interview (J.H.) with Clara and Henri Benoîts, Issy-les Moulineaux, 22 Nov. 2002. [42] Thénault, 'La Presse silencieuse?'

[43] Catherine Benayoun, 'Photopsie d'un massacre', *Carnet d'échanges*, 1 (May 1999), 37–46, 38.

[44] To supplement the extensive press cuttings on 17 Oct. 1961 held at the Préfecture de Police (HA112), all available parallel and clandestine publications have also been consulted. French state news media reproduced official versions and are not included here.

[45] See Jacques Fauvet, *Le Monde* (19 Oct. 1961). [46] *Libération* (24 Oct. 1961).

The violence of the week of 17–20 October underlined for the left in general the extent to which forms of repression in France increasingly resembled those in Algeria. Claude Krief in *L'Express* stated that, for Algerians, 'France has gradually become an extension of the pacification zones'.[47] *Esprit* judged that 'what has been happening on a daily basis in Algiers has now taken place in Paris'.[48] For *Les Temps modernes*, 'the "ratonnade", born in Algiers, is becoming established in Paris'.[49] The increased visibility of the repression also struck French observers. *Esprit* remarked that 'for the first time, the Algerian War has revealed its true nature to those who have continued to live as if it didn't exist'.[50]

Nor was the specifically racist dimension of this colonial violence lost. For *Libération*, the repression had been an opportunity for the police 'to kill and assuage their racial hatred'.[51] *Ratonnade* rather than 'pogrom' would eventually win out as the term most used to describe what happened on 17 October. Use of the term *ratonnade*, and the increasing number of other referents specifically relating to the Algerian War, showed that a shift had partially been accomplished since the July 1953 repression in Paris, as the left slowly realized the imbrication of racialized colonial power relations and their most blatant expression in the form of mass violence. However, earlier themes remained strong, with more analogies drawn with the oppression of Jewish people in France. Such parallels were not without controversy. Some analogies between Vichy and 17 October tended to conflate means (the specific racialized techniques of repression involved) and ends, since genocide was not the intention of police tactics on 17 October, notwithstanding a common dehumanization of the racialized group in both cases.[52] *Esprit* criticized the position set out in an appeal published by the more radically anti-colonial *Les Temps modernes* that stated 'we refuse to differentiate between the Algerians crammed into the Palais des Sports waiting to be "deported" and the Jews locked up at Drancy before Deportation'.[53] For *Esprit*, it was 'useless to collapse one historical event into another'.[54]

Whereas moderate-left publications refused to condemn the police as an institution and viewed police brutalities as individual rather than collective,[55] more radical publications insisted on the collective nature of police violence against Algerians and the extent of police violence before 17 October. The *modus operandi* of some police/para-police units became apparent, given the similarity of testimonies recounting violence in different locations at different times. This

[47] No. 540 (19 Oct.), 7. [48] No. 300 (Nov. 1961), 'Contre la barbarie', 668.
[49] 'La "Bataille de Paris" ', *Les Temps modernes*, 186 (Nov. 1961), 618–20, 618.
[50] Le comité directeur de *L'Esprit* (Nov. 1961), 'Contre la barbarie', 667–70, 667.
[51] Emmanuel d'Astier de la Vigerie, *Libération* (24 Oct. 1961).
[52] See Madeleine Rebérioux, 'Réminiscences', in *Droit et liberté*, 204 (15 Dec. 1961–15 Jan. 1962), 7–8. See also Daniel Gordon, 'The Paris Pogrom, 1961', MA dissertation (University of Sussex, 1998), 13.
[53] 'Appel', *Les Temps modernes*, 186 (Nov. 1961), 624–8, 624. Suburban Drancy served as the main 'holding centre' for Jewish people in France arrested during Vichy.
[54] 'Inutile . . . de pratiquer des assimilations historiques' ('Contre la barbarie', 668).
[55] See Albert Gazier, *Le Populaire* (7 Nov. 1961).

'retrospective realization' was something the PCF also exploited, with instructions given to its elected representatives—as part of their criticism of the Gaullists—to highlight the repression 'against Algerian workers by showing that it very much predates the Paris demonstrations'.[56] Claude Bouret, who put together the URP-CFTC's brochure *Face à la répression*, explained that when he sent out appeals for testimonies, union members told him that ' "lots of things had happened prior to that [*17 October*], and the repression continued afterwards" '.[57]

The way in which one specific event (17 October) came to cast light on a longer series of systemic violence was therefore already very much in evidence within left-wing responses to this violence, hence the interest from opposition groups in earlier examples of repression to provide additional credibility to their criticsm of the authorities. Indeed, many of the legal depositions that were forthcoming after 17 October in fact concerned allegations of police violence before (or after) that specific date.

In the period immediately after 17 October, the key aim of opposition groups was therefore to provide a counter-narrative to the official version. However, the authorities prevented a number of key opposition publications from reaching the public.[58] Press reactions outside France were often but not universally critical of police violence, and depended on the national political context in each case.[59] These reactions resulted in little tangible pressure on the French government.

Newspapers such as *Libération* and *Témoignage chrétien* centralized many testimonies,[60] and *Le Monde* published many readers' letters detailing what they had witnessed. The FLN lawyers collective ensured wider publicity to the legal complaints filed by Algerians. For example, the case of Mohamed Badache (see Chapter 3) attracted significant press coverage, and was arguably one of the few instances of opposition groups successfully showing how individual Algerians were caught in a violent system from which they found it difficult to escape. In the process, the individual affected therefore lost some of the relatively anonymous, depersonalized status that was consonant with the structural position of the Algerian migrant within colonial society. There is evidence that the protests after 17 October created a climate in which more Algerians, their partners, and families, did feel confident in bringing complaints although, as we saw in Part I, they had no hope of justice being done. However, many other Algerians remained too scared to come forward for several decades. Furthermore, we should not forget

[56] PCF Archives, Décisions du Secrétariat, No. 931, 24 Oct. 1961, 1.

[57] Interview (J.H.) with Claude Bouret, Paris, 14 June 2002.

[58] On press seizures, see APP-HA32, 'Saisies d'articles et de publications/Divers (1958–1962)'.

[59] See e.g. in Great Britain, *Guardian*, 26 Oct. ('Murders in Paris: A Disease of Violence') and *New Statesman*, 27 Oct. ('The Paris Pogrom'). See also the Moroccan newspaper *Al-Istiqlâl* (21 Oct. 1961), extracts of which are reproduced in Amiri, *Les Fantômes*, 152–3. See Daniel Gordon, 'World Reactions to the 1961 Paris Pogrom', *University of Sussex Journal of Contemporary History*, 1 (Sept. 2000), <*www.sussex.ac.uk/history/1-4-1-2.html*>.

[60] See *Libération* (28 Oct. 1961), 'Le Dossier du racisme'; *Témoignage chrétien* (3 Nov. 1961), 'D'accord ou non, dites-le nous'.

the many hundreds of Algerians deported following 17 October who had suffered violence, yet whose deportation and subsequent detention in Algeria thereby removed their ability to testify.[61]

As well as newspapers, flyers, and brochures, some public meetings publicized the extent and nature of police violence. The public meeting organized on 3 November at Nanterre by the Secours populaire français (SPF), in conjunction with the town's PCF mayor, Raymond Barbet, sought to question the official version of events through having Algerians recount their experiences.[62] At a public meeting on 6 November, the SPF's medical commission, in conjunction with the main medical student association, centralized numbers of injured Algerians treated in hospital on 17 October and in following days.[63] Inundated with examples of police violence, the CIMADE, rather than reacting as a single association, encouraged initiatives such as a protest declaration by the Fédération protestante de France on 26 October.[64] However, senior CIMADE official Jacques Baumont complained on 27 October that 'we are aware of the ineffectiveness of our protests'.[65]

It was as if the number of Algerian deaths on 17 October, and the ways in which they had died, resembled an open secret that no one could prove. The uncertainty over the numbers killed, the chronological and spatial distribution of killings (absence of unity of time or place), and the time taken for the truth to be partially revealed, all further hindered campaigning.

FRACTURED PROTESTS ON THE LEFT

Danielle Tartakowsky has underlined the extent to which, for trade union strategy, the Algerian War was often subordinated to the contingencies of the cold war.[66] To better understand the levels and forms of protest after 17 October, we therefore need to return to the CGT (and hence PCF) and CFTC, the key organizations capable of stimulating, coordinating, and channelling protest.

The anti-fascist paradigm used by the Communist left, portrayed the 17 October repression as representative of a slide into fascism for which the Gaullist government was responsible, and focused attention away from Algerian demands for independence. For the left (Communists and some non-Communists), there

[61] See the intervention by Senator Labidi Neddaf, *JODP* (Senate), session of 30 Nov. 1961, 2270.

[62] The SPF then published 6,000 copies of an 8-page brochure, *Le SPF vous dit toute la vérité sur le martyre des travailleurs algériens résidant en France*, supplement to *La Défense*, 446 (Dec. 1961). On the PCF's tense relationship with the Algerians in Nanterre—notably those in the *bidonvilles*—before and after 17 Oct., see Cohen, 'Les Algériens des bidonvilles de Nanterre', 151–63.

[63] See *Libération* (7 Nov. 1961).

[64] CIMADE Archives DZ/06(V), 'Tortures, violences, atteintes aux personnes', Dossier 'Répression police parisienne du mois d'octobre 1961', dated 15 Nov. 1961.

[65] As above, letter from Jacques Beaumont to Étienne Bauer.

[66] Intervention to conference of 23–4 Nov. 2001, in supplement to *L'Union*, 83 (Dec. 2001), 7.

existed the distinct possibility that the exactions visited on Algerians could and would then spread to French people. As the PCF's Political Bureau put it on 19 October: 'Each worker and French democrat should feel personally threatened by the fascistic measures taken against Algerian workers: such measures could spread to effect French workers in the future',[67] hence the call for 'Peace in Algeria'. The PCF and CGT (but also, to some extent, the CFTC) thus interpreted 17 October within the existing political frameworks and the themes they carried: the war situation; the danger presented by fascism and hence critique of the Gaullist government; the cold war. Yet, in late October 1961, this anti-fascist 'consensus' was still only at a nascent stage and incapable of overcoming key differences between the PCF and CGT on one hand, and the CFTC, UNEF, and PSU on the other.

A second theme on the left consisted of a relatively consensual moral and humanitarian discourse, stressing the need for material solidarity with Algerians, referred to as victims as opposed to political actors. This discourse existed especially within the PCF's many satellite organizations (MRAP, SPF, Mouvement de la Paix, Union des femmes françaises (UFF)). The solidarity envisaged with Algerians by the PCF was essentially of a humanitarian nature. The SPF in particular played a key role in organizing material aid to Algerians in the north-western Paris suburbs by delivering money, food, and clothes, coordinating blood donations, and visiting injured Algerians in hospital. The SPF (in conjunction with the UFF) also gathered Algerian testimonies, in addition to encouraging petitions and delegations.[68] The SPF was at pains to point out that its solidarity towards Algerians had started well before 17 October.[69] This showed the competitive logic on the left that resulted in a multiplication rather than unification of initiatives following 17 October.

This humanitarian register complemented the defensive anti-fascist action the PCF was seeking to develop. But how significant did the PCF consider the 17 October violence to have been? In fact, PCF priorities were elsewhere at this point, and focused on the question of East German rearmament in the longer term, and the importance of the 22nd Congress of the Soviet Union Communist Party congress held in Moscow from 17 October in the short term.[70] The minutes of the PCF's Political Bureau meeting of 19 October stated that 'the political situation is dominated by the proceedings of the 22nd Congress of the Soviet Union Communist Party'.[71] This bureau meeting nevertheless called the 17 October demonstrations 'a very considerable political event', and appealed to the Party to 'develop solidarity with the Algerian people and protest against the repression hitting Algerian workers in France'.[72] The PCF and CGT were also involved in various social movements at this point that kept priorities elsewhere.[73]

[67] *L'Humanité* (19 Oct. 1961). [68] See *Le SPF vous dit toute la vérité*. [69] Ibid. 8.
[70] PCF Archives, Décisions du Secrétariat, No. 919, 13 Sept. 1961, 1, and No. 927, 10 Oct. 1961, 3. [71] PCF Archives, Bureau politique, No. 930, 19 Oct. 1961, 1.
[72] Ibid. 2, 3. [73] Tristan, *Le Silence du fleuve*, 109.

Indeed, the PCF was careful in its appeals for unified action against the repression, again showing how the wider strategic interests shaped forms of protest. On 18 October its Political Bureau issued a call asking that 'measures be increased to organize unified mass action *in factories and locally*, to bring about forms of concrete solidarity between French and Algerian workers', thus implying small-scale responses.[74] As we saw in Chapter 7, the PCF was suspicious of the growing non-Communist bloc that had started to emerge since late 1960 and that had partially seized the PCF's political initiative. The PCF feared calls for a central Paris demonstration and therefore relocated its actions to its outer-Parisian and suburban strongholds where the CGT and other PCF satellite organizations were politically dominant. However, the forms of protest that the PCF encouraged did not always involve public demonstrations even outside of central Paris. As Danielle Tartakowsky has argued, the PCF and Mouvement de la Paix at that time preferred work stoppages (*débrayages*) and protest delegations (*délégations*).[75]

In the light of the apparent 'misunderstanding' between the FLN and the PCF before 17 October, the PCF may have been further reluctant to become involved in leading and coordinating protests after 17 October. Any joint PCF–FLN protests (if such initiatives had existed) were clearly off the agenda by early November. In response to the FLN prison hunger strikes, the PCF's Léon Feix spoke of the need to increase solidarity with Algerians in the workplace, and if Algerian women demonstrated, to 'examine how, *the day after and on following days*, to organize acts of solidarity with French women'.[76] We know that the FLN was suspicious of PCF intentions in late 1961, viewing even the PCF's humanitarian initiatives as a means to increase its standing with the FLN given the PCF's reluctance to support the FLN more fully during the war.[77]

At Paris level, the CGT-UD Seine, following a line close to that of the PCF, published a declaration on 18 October calling on Paris workers to show solidarity with the 'Algerian workers', while delegating responsibility for protest action to each workplace.[78] Its General Secretary, Eugène Hénaff, protested to de Gaulle on 20 October, sending the President a dossier on 'the savage intervention' of the security forces and basing his case on 'facts that the press has been unable to relate but that we cannot keep quiet'.[79] The supplement from the 8 November 1961 edition of *Le Travailleur parisien* contained the numerous details on repression that the UD-Seine had collected.[80] However, by 7 November the rubric 'Repression against Algerian workers' in the minutes of its Political Bureau meetings, introduced on 10 October, had been replaced by 'Peace in Algeria'. As mid-November approached, the anti-fascist dynamic became stronger, but refocused on the OAS,

[74] L'Humanité (19 Oct. 1961), emphasis added.
[75] Tartakowsky, *Les Manifestations de rue*, 692.
[76] PCF Archives, Décisions du Secrétariat, no. 936, 8 Nov. 1961, 1, emphasis added.
[77] Haroun, *La 7è Wilaya*, 302–3.
[78] APP-H1B35, 'Manifestations d'octobre 1961—Tracts'.
[79] ADSSD CGT UD-Seine, 49 J 485, 'Manifestations des Algériens en France, 17 octobre 1961', dossier 'Correspondance suite au 17/10/1961'.
[80] See new series 54 (8 Nov. 1961), 7.

and the question of anti-Algerian repression became much less prominent. While the national-level CGT was also calling for unified action at local level after 17 October, it is unclear how willing it was to engage in such action on a larger scale. Criticism by the CGT's Political Bureau of the CFTC's decision to organize a national day of action against the war and repression on 17 November indicate CGT/CFTC tensions.[81]

In reality, reluctance to initiate national-level protests also existed at the CFTC. While the URP-CFTC was generally more active in its protests against repression than the CGT-UD Seine, the various tensions that existed within the CFTC significantly affected the ability of the URP-CFTC to respond after 17 October. At an extraordinary meeting of the URP-CFTC's Bureau on 27 October, officials were told that the union's Confederal Council that had met on 23 October 'was not very favourable to the idea of a national day of action (*Journée nationale*) on the fate of Algerian workers'.[82] The URP-CFTC delegates due to attend the CFTC's National Confederal Committee meetings on 28–9 October resolved to try again at that point. They used the URP-CFTC document *Face à la répression* to try to convince other delegates attending these meetings of the need for a national-level response.[83] This document therefore had an important internal function within the CTFC as well as seeking to alert wider public opinion (see Chapter 5).[84]

However, at the National Confederal Committee, URP-CFTC initiatives met similar opposition as at the Confederal Council. While the strategic considerations regarding the dangers of entering into alliances with the CGT were no doubt important, the decisions of the National Confederal Committee also indicate the order of priorities regarding Algeria for the delegates: peace negotiations and guarantees for *pieds-noirs* in post-independence Algeria. Finally, this Committee sought to initiate, via a large media campaign, an end to the 'bullying, humiliation and physical abuse that the authorities too often resort to against the Muslim population'.[85] A delegate from the CFTC-affiliated teaching union SGEN (Syndicat général de l'Éducation nationale) remarked angrily—referring to the 17 October demonstration—that 'we're the ones who should have organized the demonstration if our trade unionism knew where its responsibilities lay'.[86]

Even at local level, unitary action between CFTC and CGT proved more difficult beyond the workplace. All union leaders expected another Algerian demonstration in Paris on 1 November to mark the seventh anniversary of the start of the war.[87] In anticipation of 1 November, there had been rare discussion across unions, which

[81] IHS, CGT Archives Confédérales, Box 'Algérie', Dossier 9, Communiqué of 13 Nov. 1961.

[82] URP-CFTC Archives, Box 21, 'Bureau-Conseil-Secrétariat, Procès-verbaux 1960 à 1964'.

[83] ACON CFTC Archives, 6 H 24, URP-CFTC, *Note sur l'action de l'U.R.P. pour la Paix en Algérie et contre la répression*, 2 pp., 1.

[84] Author's interview (J.H.) with Claude Bouret, Paris, 14 June 2002.

[85] ACON CFTC Archives, 6 H 24, URP-CFTC, *Circulaire aux syndicats et aux unions locales*, 30 Oct. 1961, 2.

[86] *Syndicalisme universitaire*, 249 (22 Nov. 1961), 2.

[87] ACON CFTC Archives, 6 H 24, URP-CFTC, *Circulaire aux syndicats et aux unions locales*, 30 Oct. 1961, 1.

resulted in parallel declarations on 30 October warning the government that a repeat of the repression of 17 October would signal a 'further stage in the installation of a fascist regime in France'. Such repression, the declaration continued, 'would spark off an immediate reaction from all workers in the Paris region'.[88] Jean-Luc Einaudi has interpreted this parallel declaration of the URP-CFTC, the CGT-UD Seine, and UNEF as the sign of the unwillingness of unions to respond in any consequential way after 17 October.[89] It was certainly a sign of the divisions between the CFTC-UNEF 'bloc' and the CGT that they would only commit to future action against repression.[90]

Furthermore, the URP-CFTC had been in discussions with other unions, regarding the possibility of having a joint day of action in Paris before 10 November. This action never materialized, since the various unions could not agree on the forms this action should take.[91] On 12 November, the URP-CFTC published a recriminatory document that detailed the CGT-UD Seine's preference for a response 'in factories and locally', and stated that only the UNEF had agreed to a unitary, central Paris demonstration. It concluded that, 'given the current apathy of opinion, the low chances of success of a mass demonstration organized in such conditions, and the CGT-UD's likelihood of going along with a CFTC initiative', there instead needed to be a national (CFTC) day of action for 17 November.[92] While there were numerous small scale—and sometimes unitary—initiatives on 17 November, in Paris, the suburbs, and notably in West and South-West France, the CFTC's 17 November day of action was not a significant political event, since the union lacked the mass following of the CGT.[93] Thus the PCF, the CGT, and the CFTC could not agree on the response to 17 October being a priority, nor on the forms their protests should take, nor on a general strategy of alliances, hence the dispersed nature of the responses.

The more dynamic protests after 17 October came from elsewhere: students, the PSU, and radical anti-war protesters. The more radical student groups combined, rather than dissociated, anti-fascism and anti-colonialism, and were increasingly galvanized in opposition to the OAS. Protests on the Left Bank began on 21 October with some 1,000 university students and staff gathering in the Sorbonne courtyard, under the title 'Solidarity with Algerian workers—Peace in Algeria'.[94] The text read out stated that 'moral protests are no longer enough'.[95] While the UNEF was, as we have seen, for central Paris demonstrations with the

[88] *Le Monde* (1 Nov. 1961). [89] Einaudi, *La Bataille de Paris*, 236.

[90] Gordon, 'Paris Pogrom', 41.

[91] ACON CFTC Archives, 6 H 24, URP-CFTC, *Note sur l'action de l'U.R.P. pour la Paix en Algérie et contre la répression*, 2 pp., 2, and minutes of extraordinary meeting of 8 Nov. 1961 (Bureau politique).

[92] URP-CFTC Archives, Box 59, dossier 'URP Circulaires-tracts septembre-décembre 1961', Circular of 12 Nov.

[93] See *Le Monde* (19–20 Nov.), 2. See also ACON CFTC Archives Confédérales, 6 H 23, Bureau confédéral, Circulaire du 13 novembre 1961, 3 pp., 'Journée nationale d'action pour la paix en Algérie', 3 pp. [94] *Le Monde* (22–3 Oct. 1961), and *L'Humanité* (23 Oct. 1961).

[95] Text quoted in Einaudi, *La Bataille de Paris*, 225.

CFTC and (potentially) other partners, the student street protests that took place after 17 October were at the instigation of more radical organizations, the UNEF remaining within a legalistic framework.[96]

The radical Comité anti-colonialiste étudiant, which brought together colonial student groups, Jewish student organizations, the Étudiants socialistes unifiés (the student branch of the PSU), and the UEC, was very involved in the Sorbonne and later protests. After a short student demonstration in the 6th arrondissement (Carrefour de Buci) on 22 October,[97] on 23 October there were several further small-scale student gatherings on the Left Bank under the banners 'Down with the curfew/Peace in Algeria/Gestapo-death to fascism/Fascism won't succeed/Death to racism'. Police stopped any larger demonstrations from occurring: there were twenty-four arrests and police injured two demonstrators.[98] A student meeting at the Mutualité on 25 October heard the president of the medical students declare that 'in the face of racism against Algerians, we are all Algerians'.[99] Student disapproval of Papon was evident on 17 November, when students disrupted the ceremonies marking the start of the academic year: *Le Monde* reported that students chanted 'Papon, murderer!', 'Police murderers'.[100]

Well implanted among students and intellectuals, but still small-scale, the PSU's importance far outweighed its quantitative base. The PSU situated its protests within action 'for Peace'.[101] On 1 November, the PSU organized two brief protests in central Paris, one at Place Clichy, involving up to 1,000 people, and the other on the boulevard Poissonnière, scene of Algerian deaths on 17 October. Personalities such as Simone de Beauvoir participated in these protests.[102] Also on 1 November, the various anti-war groups held a silent gathering at Maubert Métro station, with Jean-Paul Sartre and many from the Comité Maurice Audin, Témoignages et documents and Vérité-Liberté in attendance. The OAS exploded a bomb at this otherwise peaceful gathering, injuring three people.[103] For Pierre Vidal-Naquet, these protests at the end of October may have been a reaction against the lack of response to 17 October in the intervening days, and the result of the tract *Groupe de policiers* and the debates in Parliament. For him, 'At this point, it seems we can talk of a second stage [*of protest*] with shame on the increase. Then silence sets in again.'[104] Témoignages et documents had held this protest to make up for what it judged to be the left's 'scandalous shortcomings' since 17 October.[105] One of the rare iconic references that has survived of this phase of protest is a photograph of a slogan painted on the wall overlooking the Seine by

[96] Fischer, *Histoire des étudiants en France*, 237.
[97] See *Le Monde* (24 Oct. 1961), 7.
[98] APP-HA110, 'Protestations contre les mesures prises à l'égard des Algériens'. See also *L'Humanité* and *Libération* (24 Oct. 1961).
[99] Einaudi, *La Bataille de Paris*, 234.
[100] *Le Monde* (17 Nov. 1961), 16.
[101] See the PSU flyer, *Les Algériens manifestent: Pourquoi?* in ACON CFTC, 6 H 24.
[102] Heurgon, *Histoire du P.S.U.*, 341–3.
[103] Einaudi, *La Bataille de Paris*, 238, and *Le Monde* (2 Nov. 1961).
[104] Pierre Vidal-Naquet, untitled chapter in Lallaoui and Assouline, *À propos d'octobre 1961*, 55.
[105] On this, see *Témoignages et documents*, 32 (Nov. 1961), 8.

10. 'Here is where Algerians are being drowned', a rare and fleeting slogan painted on the night of 5 November 1961 by anti-war activists on the parapet of the River Seine near the Pont des Arts and photographed by Jean Texier before being cleaned off by the Prefecture of Police. (Jean Texier, by permission of Keystone.)

dissident young Communist anti-war and counter-cultural activists dissatisfied with the mainstream left's response after 17 October (see Photo 10).[106]

PROTESTS: A QUANTITATIVE SURVEY

Before looking at how the radical anti-colonial left and the FLN judged the responses to 17 October, it is worth quantifying these many fragmented protests, based on a survey of the type, scale, chronology, and geography of protests against the 17 October violence between 18 October and 17 November.[107]

As already suggested, the majority of protest initiatives after 17 October were formal: that is, they involved the publication of public letters, petitions, declarations, and appeals. Overall, there were at least some 189 such initiatives, with 97 of these

[106] On this, see Vincent Lemire and Yann Pottin, ' "ICI ON NOIE LES ALGÉRIENS." Fabriques documentaries, avatars politiques et mémoires partagées d'une icône militante (1961–2001)', *Genèses*, 49 (Dec. 2002), 140–62.

[107] These details are necessarily incomplete for a number of reasons. First, CGT-UD Seine CGT union archives lack protest statistics for 22–9 Oct. Second, anecdotal evidence suggests that some factory-based protests went unrecorded. Thirdly, PCF or CGT sources tend to overestimate the numbers involved in protests. However, Préfecture de Police, newspaper, and CFTC sources often listed the various initiatives undertaken. By cross-correlation it has therefore been possible to establish minimum figures. After 17 Nov., the initatives are almost exclusively around the theme of anti-fascism, although the few initiatives after that date and up to the end of November 1961 that were specifically based on protest against 17 Oct. have been included in these figures.

in Paris, 71 in the suburbs, 20 in the regions, and one abroad. Reactions in the suburbs were more spontaneous, with 45 such initiatives in the first week (up to and including 24 October) as opposed to 38 in Paris. In the second week, however (25–31 October), there were more initiatives in Paris (31) than in the suburbs (18), suggesting that it took longer for some Parisians to become sensitized to these issues. The numbers of signatures on those petitions consulted range from 4 to 970, with an average of between 50 and 100. Employers, local councillors, members of parliament, and social workers also wrote in to the Prefecture, which dealt with 117 requests to locate missing Algerians.[108]

A similar pattern emerges regarding work stoppages (*débrayages*): there were at least 37, with only 3 such initiatives in central Paris, as opposed to 23 in the suburbs in the week up to 24 October, this mode of action declining almost immediately, with the exception of later reactions in the regions (5). Protest delegations (*délégations*), often to present petitions to the Prefecture of Police or the Élysée, took place almost exclusively in the days following 17 October (some 23 of the 26 occurring before 25 October), with the majority concerning Parisians, although a fair number of localized suburban initiatives probably went unrecorded.[109]

The 17 October repression produced at least 13 public rallies (*meetings*)—more in Paris (8) in the weeks following 17 October as elements of opinion became sensitized to the repression, although attendance was poor. For example, only 50 people went to the conference by the PCF's Jacques Duclos on 20 October at the Hôtel Moderne, and, following Papon's banning of the satellite Communist Mouvement de la Paix rally on 26 October, only 120 attended the replacement meeting.[110] The MRAP held a rally on 8 November against 'the racist danger in our country', at which 250 people were present.[111] A large number of small-scale protest gatherings (*rassemblements*) took place—some 37, with far more in the suburbs (24) than in Paris (7), and the regions (6).[112] In the suburbs, 12 of these 24 *rassemblements* were in the period up to 24 October, although *rassemblements* continued well into November, particularly in the regions.

What is striking is the small number of demonstrations: only 11 overall for the entire period to 17 November, 5 of which were in Paris, to which must be added at least 13 protests by Algerian women outside the Paris region on 20 October.[113]

[108] See APP-HA110, 'Personnes portées disparues'; *Amiri, La Bataille de France*, 173.

[109] We have counted as one delegation the presenting of petitions at the Nanterre town hall on 23 Oct., although various groups were involved: see *L'Humanité* (23 and 24 Oct. 1961).

[110] These are police figures. See APP-HA110, 'Manifestations du 17–20 octobre 1961: Rapports de la police municipale', 'Rapport du Commissaire Divisionnaire Chef du 3è district', 5 Nov. 1961.

[111] See APP-HA33, Réunions politiques (1958–1962), 'Rapport sur la réunion du MRAP du 8 novembre'.

[112] These figures do not include the 15 processions (cortèges) that Danielle Tartakowsky, *Les Manifestations de rue*, 683 mentions as part of the Jeunesses communistes day of protest on 19 Oct.

[113] Algerian women and some Algerian men held protests against repression in fourteen towns in France. See *Le Monde* (22–3 Oct. 1961); Stora, *Ils venaient d'Algérie*, 310–11. There was a mainly women's protest in Lyon on 18 Oct. (see Yamna Abssi's testimony in Le Cour Grandmaison, *Le 17 octobre 1961*, 30–1).

None of these protests attracted more than 1,500 people at the very most. As Danielle Tartakowsky has remarked, left-wing demonstrations concerning the war were banned, risked police intervention, were on a more controversial subject than most, and therefore drew in far less numbers than would otherwise have been the case.[114] Had the absence for several years of large public demonstrations also started to sap the reflex to go onto the streets? As well as in Accra, demonstrations against the repression took place in Rabat, where, according to observer Anne Preiss, 'a human tide swept down the main avenue'.[115]

In the absence of any large-scale central Paris demonstrations after 17 October, protests were often limited to the social spaces occupied by specific groups and seldom transcended class barriers: students, university teachers, other intellectuals, and middle-class protestors generally demonstrated in central Paris, whereas working-class gatherings were in the outer Paris arrondissements and the suburbs. The numerous but highly localized, dispersed, and small-scale reactions in the suburbs are explainable in part by the PCF/CGT strategies already analysed, resulting in such protests having little impact on the national level, further giving the impression of an absence of response.

Within Paris, petitions and other forms of reactions tended to take place in those districts where many Algerians lived (e.g. the 5th, 6th, 11th, 13th, 14th, 18th, 19th and 20th arrondissements): these were probably areas where opinion, although polarized, brought solidarity from some French people in daily contact with Algerians. Some areas of Paris seem to have responded with joint initiatives, notably in the 13th arrondissement, which for several years had been a centre of anti-colonial activism. Here, religious groups, alongside the main unions, the PCF and PSU, denounced 'the racist nature of the measures taken by the government against Algerians and the repressive action undertaken by the police'.[116]

Similarly, those suburbs where reactions were numerous were often those with the largest numbers of Algerians (e.g. Aubervilliers, Boulogne, Gennevilliers, Montreuil, Nanterre, Saint-Denis). While we know that there were no large-scale responses at Renault after 17 October, on October 20 there was a joint CGT and FO initiative by women from the factory to the town hall and police station in Boulogne to stop mistreatment of those Algerian women arrested on their way to demonstrate that day. At a gathering outside the factory, protestors surrounded and rocked a police car, shouting 'Murderers'.[117]

Not all responses to 17 October were organized by trade unions or political parties: when Algerian colleagues did not return from work on 18 October, there were examples of checks being undertaken to see how many Algerian workers were missing.[118] This could lead to stoppages and protests. On 19 October, there

[114] Tartakowsky, *Les Manifestations de rue*, 675.

[115] Interviewed in Charby, *Les Porteurs d'espoir*, 84. On Accra, see Gordon, 'Paris Pogrom', 51. See also Gordon, 'World Reactions to the 1961 Paris Pogrom'.

[116] See *Le Monde* and *L'Humanité* (21 Oct. 1961).

[117] *L'Humanité* (21 Oct. 1961).

[118] See the reports in *L'Humanité* (27 Oct. 1961) on the cases at Erikson and Bernard-Moteur factories.

was a unitary protest at TIRU in Ivry, where four Algerian colleagues were not present at work.[119] At the Plaine-Saint-Denis gas works, employees were called out to protest for the 'return to the factory of Tarbi Larbi, one of their colleagues who disappeared during the events of 17 and 18 October' and to denounce the 'police brutality'.[120] When partners of Algerians were able to ascertain they were detained at the CIV, delegations headed there in an attempt to secure the men's release. For example, on 1 November, women from Saint-Denis (Cité Henri Barbusse), accompanied by council employees, went first to the Prefecture of Police then the CIV, in support of one woman whose husband was held at the CIV.[121] Workplace-based protests concerned many medical and teaching staff.[122] Linda Amiri's judgement that the 17 October events 'generated an upsurge in protest and solidarity towards the Algerian community in Paris and the suburbs' seems a fair assessment, although such reactions had few tangible results.[123]

It is important to assess these reactions from a comparative perspective: as we shall see in Chapter 9, the anti-fascist demonstrations and strikes of 19 December 1961—by which time the left was gaining greater unity—registered more factory strikes, stoppages, and demonstrations in one single day than were seen during the entire two weeks following 17 October. This showed what the possibilities were for much larger initiatives when the Communist left mobilized nationally on questions it prioritized and that mattered more to its followers.

THE BALANCE SHEET

Jacques Rancière has argued that 17 October transformed the relationship between the French state and some metropolitan French citizens (himself included), since after this date they could no longer identify with the violence its agents perpetrated in their name. This was particularly so as the French police had underlined to what extent they did not consider Algerians as citizens through the repression and subsequent cover-up: 'we could not identify with the Algerians who appeared as demonstrators within the French public space, and who then disappeared. We could, on the other hand, reject our identification with the State that had killed them and removed them from all the statistics.'[124] Here we see the way in which the repression impacted on a small fraction of the left. Such reactions served to catalyse the greater anti-fascist mobilizations until the end of the war.[125]

However, as we saw in Chapter 7, this 'dis-identification' from the French state also needs to be understood as a process—started or perhaps in most cases accelerated by 17 October—and leading to two possible political stances.

[119] *L'Humanité* (20 Oct. 1961). [120] *L'Humanité* (3 Nov. 1961).
[121] *Le Monde* (2 Nov. 1961) and *L'Humanité* (4 Nov. 1961).
[122] APP-HA110, 'Protestations contre les mesures prises à l'égard des Algériens'.
[123] Amiri, *La Bataille*, 190.
[124] Rancière, 'Cause of the Other', 29 (tr. D. Macey).
[125] Ibid. 28–9. See also Ross, *May '68*, 39–40.

The first, moderate stance argued for the need to reassert citizenship and inform the French people of what the state had done in their name on 17 October: such a position did not necessarily involve identifying with the Algerian cause. For *Libération*'s Claude Estier, all French citizens needed to feel concerned by the repression since 'our honour as citizens is at stake'.[126] A second, more radical stance, often reinforced by 17 October, pointed towards not only a dis-identification with the French state but a subsequent identification (or strengthened existing identification) with Algerian and third-worldist causes more generally, often accompanied by a dis-identification from the mainstream left. For the more radical French supporters of the Algerian cause, Algerians on 17 October were not solely 'passive' victims of state violence: Algerians were political actors seizing collective agency through their demonstrations for independence and hence freedom and equality in the face of a status of profound inequality. Furthermore, these demonstrations had challenged the curfew and the legal, spatial, social, and ethnic segregation and discrimination that the French state (and society) had imposed on them.[127] However, as we saw, representing Algerians as victims, via the respective registers of anti-racism and humanitarian aid constituted, along with anti-fascism, the principal and more consensual registers evoked to condemn 17 October. Moral registers were often used by those who found it difficult to support the means by which Algerians would become political subjects both individually and collectively (and the former via the latter). This distinction between (*a*) speaking of Algerians as victims and (*b*) speaking of them as political actors generally marked the separation between the moderate and radical (anti-colonial) left. Anti-fascism might recognize that the conditions of possibility for a substantial challenge to democracy stemmed from the crisis of decolonization, yet frequently deflected attention away from the FLN and Algerian independence.

Another distinction between 'moderates' and 'radicals' was the way in which, for pro-Algerians, solidarity with Algerians had to be real and palpable, and not just formal and verbal. For radical groups such as Jeune Résistance, 'active resistance' against governmental repression was necessary, with French people going on demonstrations alongside Algerians to call for independence (and socialism) against the common enemies of colonialism, fascism, and capitalism.[128] The dissident Communist La Voie communiste called for mass solidarity with Algerians and more factory-based protests 'with our Algerian brothers against the new Gestapo'. It asked: 'French workers, can you remain indifferent in the face of these measures? Have you forgotten the history of Nazism?'[129]

[126] *Libération* (19 Oct. 1961).

[127] See Sidi Mohammed Barkat, *Le Corps d'exception: Les Artifices du pouvoir colonial et la destruction de la vie* (Paris: Éditions Amsterdam, 2005), ch. 6, 'Corps et état'.

[128] APP-HA110, 'Réactions aux mesures prises à l'encontre de la population nord-africaine de Paris, octobre 1961' (undated).

[129] Bibliothèque nationale de France, 4Lb61-600 (1961), Tracts (undated).

The most radical anti-colonial groups were therefore highly critical of what they judged to be the formalism of the left's response. For François Maspero, 17 October was a highly 'readable' event, politically speaking, since he and others like him were already aware of policing tactics and their practical consequences for Algerians. These radical student and third-worldist groups and individuals argued that the PCF and CGT should be leading working-class opinion rather than sheltering behind the view that public opinion 'was not ready'. The fact that the offices of *L'Humanité* on the boulevard Poissonnière had their shutters down on 17 October while police repression was taking place outside was considered symbolic of the barriers the PCF had placed between itself and the Algerians and, by extension, the FLN apparatus.[130]

Maspero was also critical of the demonstration at Maubert on 1 November, showing the rifts between the most radical anti-colonial activists and those not actively engaged in pro-FLN activities. Maspero questioned to what extent this demonstration responded to the FLN's call for French people to give meaningful support to Algerians and to defend them against attack: instead, this resulted in '5 minutes of silence with the connivance of the murderers [*i.e. the police*]'.[131] Similarly, for the review *Socialisme ou barbarie*: 'the French left looks on and doesn't intervene, votes protest motions, signs appeals and accuses Papon at the City Council. Real solidarity [*with Algerians*] on the streets is out of the question.'[132]

Thus while the PCF spoke of a 'considerable protest movement',[133] such declarations sounded hollow to those hoping for a mass response from the French left after 17 October. Many former radical anti-colonial campaigners therefore felt betrayed and bitter, explaining in part why the memory of 17 October was so marginal to the mainstream French left before the 1980s. For many radical anti-colonial activists, 17 October evokes not just the repression and its covering up, but also the response of the mainstream left. The most active forms of pro-Algerian political solidarity were within the 'clandestine networks destined to remain so' that were ill suited to respond after 17 October, or that were voiced within a parallel press that the government easily silenced.[134]

How did the FLN itself judge the French reactions? As we have seen, the FLN hoped that the 17 October demonstrations would bring about a shift in French public opinion, notably on the left. In assessing responses to the 17 October demonstrations, the FLN distinguished quite carefully between the various groups within French society, and the various elements of the left.

On 18 October, in its (pre-written) appeal to the French public, the FLN drew again on the analogy with the Vichy persecution of Jews, phrasing its appeal in

[130] See the interview with Alain Krivine, at the time member of Jeune Résistance while also being a dissident member of the Jeunesses communistes (in Charby, *Les Porteurs d'espoir*, 128–36, here 135–6).

[131] F. Maspero, 'Entre les chiens et les hommes', *Partisans,* 2 (Nov.–Dec. 1961), 223–6.

[132] No. 33 (Dec. 1961–Feb. 1962), anonymous, 86.

[133] *L'Humanité* (21 Oct. 1961).

[134] Pattieu, *Les Camarades des frères*, 165.

terms of anti-racism. This indicated how well the FF-FLN leaders knew French society and how to address it, targeting one key aspect of the demonstration—the boycott of a discriminatory measure—rather than the demands for independence that the demonstrations had also voiced. This showed the appropriation of French themes the better to resist French hegemony,[135] whereas the left often displaced counter-hegemonic discourses (demands for independence) in favour of more consensual anti-racist and anti-fascist themes. As we have seen, demands for equality of treatment for Algerians could be situated within the Republican theme of supposed equality of French citizens before the law, but for the FLN, real future equality for Algerians could only be assured within independent Algeria.

The FLN appeal also called on French workers, whose 'duty is to be on the side of the oppressed against the oppressors. Those who are waging war on us are the same ones who are exploiting you.' The FLN asked the 'French democrats' to act to stop Paris becoming 'the capital of racism'. For left-wingers, it said that their 'passivity would be culpable' in the face of the current situation. What was needed was for French people to show concrete solidarity with Algerians to stop them being brutalized, to demand an end to the curfew, and the resumption of negotiations.[136]

The FLN internal reports give an indication of the way in which local FLN militants assessed the reactions to the 17 October demonstrations and their repression.[137] In general, these reports detail numerous localized protest initiatives but no mass response, confirming what we have already seen. A senior FLN militant judged (in his undated report) that: 'French public opinion, that has until now remained inert, is starting to realize the legitimate demands of the Algerian people', but that the 'complicity' of French public opinion with the repression was 'indirect and even direct'.[138] Another report evoked the reaction of French people: 'solidarity from the French has been forthcoming through work stoppages, strikes, and collections to help those Algerian families most affected, the students have protested on the 23rd [*October*], the CGT and PSU etc. have several demonstrations still in the pipeline, but will that stop the cowardly police in its discrimination?'[139] One report from a high-ranking militant spoke of numerous suburban demonstrations (probably *rassemblements*) and petition-signings, while noting that 'the government is continuing its arrests and arbitrary measures'.[140] Similarly, Mohamed Zouaoui, in his report of 24 October 1961,

[135] Homi K. Bhabha speaks of 'colonial *mimicry* as the affect of hybridity—at once a mode of appropriation and of resistance' (*The Location of Culture* (London: Routledge, 2004), 172, 1st publ. 1994: italics in the original). As Ali Haroun writes of FLN discourse: 'it was straightforward to recall the measures taken by the Nazis towards a certain category of the French population in the very recent past' (*La 7è Wilaya*, 365).

[136] The tract is in *Les Temps modernes*, 186 (Nov. 1961), 621–3.

[137] Most of these fifty-two reports were written between 22 and 27 Oct. 1961.

[138] APP-H1B35, 'Manifestation d'octobre 1961—rapports des responsables', No. 12 (*Rapport sur la riposte du 17 au 20 octobre au couvre-feu raciste*), 5 pp., 4.

[139] APP-H1B35, 'Manifestation d'octobre 1961—rapports des responsables', *Répression policier* [*sic*] *octobre 1961*, '1er K'.

[140] Ibid., report from No. 1213.44 (*Rapport sur les manifestations du 17 octobre 1961*).

judged that 'our demonstration on 17 October seems to have produced the goods. Things are on the move everywhere, as you must have noticed.'[141] These internal reports, written in the Paris suburbs (except for Zouaoui's), were compiled in the wake of the first 'wave' of protests in the week following 17 October. How did Algerian nationalist positions differ over the following weeks?

On 20 October, the GPRA issued a statement stating that 'solidarity between Algerian patriots and French anti-colonialists needs to show itself in practical ways, especially on 1 November, during this crucial period for the future cooperation between our two peoples'.[142] However, as we saw in Chapter 5, the GPRA, which had probably not sanctioned the 17 October initiative, was not keen for the FF-FLN to reap political benefit from it.

El Moudjahid of 1 November judged that the reaction of the French organizations had gone beyond 'the usual range of purely formal protests to undertake concrete forms of action so as to bring an end to these measures of exception and this regime of racist terror'.[143] The same newspaper in its 22 November 1961 edition, therefore speaking with greater hindsight, provides probably the most lucid assessment of French reactions. The demonstrations had served to reveal decisively to French public opinion 'the EXISTENCE and POWER of Algerian Emigration, of the FLN in France', and had forced the French authorities to act in the open, thus showing the longer term violence exacted on Algerians and eliciting international sympathy. The newspaper praised the 'revolutionary minority' among the French that 'has constantly worked alongside Algerians for years', and those who had tried to react from a moral standpoint but who had not been followed, due to the 'evasiveness of the soulless and fossilized parties of the left'. The PCF had shown 'much sympathy, and solidarity in principle, but very little concrete "mass action" '. Although 'shaken', the French left 'remains incapable of envisaging a direct challenge to the reactionary forces, even on a limited scale. And when Algerians go into battle it doesn't know what to do.'[144]

Indeed, as November 1961 progressed, a more critical stance emerged from within the FLN as the protests on the French left failed to move beyond the low-key. The student section of the FF-FLN stigmatized the general French indifference or indeed hostility towards Algerians: 'At the Palais des Sports, Ray Charles has replaced the Algerians. People go there in their droves and that gets them going. Algerians are not worth making the effort for.' After 17 October, there had been a certain 'awakening of the democrats', but this had not translated into any great political momentum.[145] Similarly, the AGTA was increasingly

[141] *Sou'al*, 7 (Sept. 1987), 87. [142] *L'Humanité* (21 Oct. 1961), 5.

[143] Extracts from *El Moudjahid*, 86 (1 Nov. 1961), in brochure 'Les Manifestations algériennes d'octobre 1961 et la répression colonialiste en France' (published Dec. 1961 by République algérienne Ministère de l'Information), 7.

[144] Extracts reproduced in *Partisans*, 3 (Feb. 1962), 155–7, 156–7.

[145] Text 'Des étudiants algériens accusent' from *L'Étudiant algérien* (Nov. 1961), reproduced in *Partisans*, 3 (Feb. 1962), 119–24, 121, 122. The Palais des Sports was cleared of Algerian detainees to make way for a concert by singer Ray Charles.

critical. The anonymous AGTA official (in fact Omar Ouhadj) reserved most of his anger for the French left. Ouhadj said that 'we have judged the solidarity of the French workers and people. We know that it doesn't exist beyond press releases, petitions and appeals.'[146] One SCINA meeting heard that, for the AGTA, the 'unions, despite their strongest protestations of friendship, are unable to get their troops out onto the streets to support the action of the FLN activists (*militants frontistes*)'.[147]

MOVING ON?

With negotiations resuming, the GPRA sought to remove the 17 October as a source of possible conflict between itself and the French negotiators. Therefore, the diplomatic and institutional logic was shifting. Other political initiatives within the GPRA were gaining ascendancy that would serve to move the aftermath of 17 October further down the list of Algerian nationalist priorities, such as the terrible violence in Algeria on 1 November. The FLN-France did not attempt to demonstrate on 1 November, although some low-key initiatives did take place, such as the clandestine hoisting of Algerian flags at Nanterre town hall, and the releasing by children of pairs of balloons carrying paper Algerian flags. A police report from Nanterre stated that, as police arrived, children ran off, 'abandoning a goat which was wearing an FLN flag attached to its horns'![148]

Beginning 1 November, the three-week hunger strike of FLN prisoners and many imprisoned French supporters of the FLN attracted much more attention from the GPRA than 17 October. Claude Lanzmann laconically wrote that, due to the strikes, French people 'are discovering their prisons after their shanty-towns'.[149] Lanzmann saw the strikes as a way for Algerians to show solidarity with the protestors on 17–20 October. The news of the October repression had caused considerable consternation among the many Algerians in detention in France, in particular as they could not find out information about loved ones: Ahmed Doum describes prisoners as having been 'demoralized'.[150] Algerian women, as on 20 October, protested across France in support of the hunger strike on 9 November (Dijon, Forbach, Grenoble, Lyon, Metz, Montbéliard, Mulhouse, Thionville), and there was support from anti-colonial students.[151]

One of the French activists who had taken part in the hunger strike at Fresnes prison, Simon Blumenthal, described his surprise on his release in late November

[146] For the detail, see Einaudi, *Octobre 1961*, 314–15, reproducing most of the text (original interview in article by Jean Cau, *L'Express* (18 Nov. 1961)).

[147] APP-HA47, Minutes of SCINA meeting, 22 Nov. 1961.

[148] APP-H1B35, report dated 1 Nov. 1961.

[149] Claude Lanzmann, 'La Grève de la faim', *Les Temps modernes*, 187 (Dec. 1961), 629–37, 630 (article dated 18 Nov.). See also Haroun, *La 7è Wilaya*, 379–96.

[150] Intervention on *Vérités* (Canal Algérie, 17 Oct. 2001), a programme by Ali Fateh Ayadi.

[151] See Stora, *Ils venaient d'Algérie*, 312–13.

(Blumenthal had been director of La Voie communiste and belonged to the clandestine Jeune Résistance network). No one was talking about 17 October, whereas he, denied the press in prison, now wanted to know all about it. French people were talking about anti-fascism.[152]

At a similar time, a police report recorded that 'the press campaingn directed against us has spilt a lot of ink but the emotion that it aroused is starting to calm down'.[153] In fact, by the second week in November the 17 October repression was already losing visibility. This was despite the 6 November publication of details that sixty bodies of Algerians had been retrieved from the Seine, the legal depositions made by Algerians, the revelations about the appalling conditions at the CIV, and debates about the possibility of a parliamentary commission of inquiry.[154] Only *Libération*, *Le Monde*, and *L'Humanité* continued to be interested in the question of 17 October.[155] Many commentators such as André Mandouze observed the 'disappearance' of 17 October during November, hidden by both the French state and the strengthening anti-fascist discourse against OAS and then state violence targeting left-wingers (the GPRA's downplaying of the question of repression passed relatively unnoticed).[156]

The feeling that the organized left in particular could and should have done more to prevent 17 October and then in response to the repression would arguably thereafter provoke the need for political 'catching-up', a compensatory function, often the result of feelings of guilt or shame. The 17 October repression did not overwhelm the left nor immediately reduce its fragmentation. Some tensions between the mainstream and radical anti-colonial left deepened, and tensions between the FLN and the mainstream left continued. In the medium term, reactions to the repression weakened some of the tensions between Communist and non-Communist blocs as the left attempted to change the political opportunity structure for mass anti-fascist protest against the OAS (rather than anti-Algerian state violence). This process of realignment on the left was discernible by December 1961 and symbolized by the reactions to Charonne.[157] 17 October therefore only represented a major event for some very limited sections of French society in addition, self-evidently, to the Algerian communities of the Paris region. This limited impact explained the difficulties in memorial terms that campaigners would later have. In addition, the controversies stemming from the immediate afterlife of the October events greatly informed the subsequent politics of memory of this violence.

[152] Interview (J.H.) with Simon Blumenthal, Paris, 25 Nov. 2002.

[153] APP-HA110, 'Manifestations du 17–20 octobre 1961. Rapports de la police municipale: 18 octobre–20 novembre 1961', note dated 20 Nov. 1961, Commissaire contrôleur général/Chef du 2è district to Papon.

[154] *See Libération* (9, 10, and 14 Nov.) and *Le Monde* (15 Nov. 1961).

[155] Thénault, 'La Presse silencieuse?', 28.

[156] See Mandouze in *Jeune Afrique* (6–12 Dec. 1961); text reproduced in his *Mémoires d'outre-siècle* (Paris: Éditions Viviane Hamy, 1998), i. 350.

[157] See Gaïti, 'Les Ratés de l'histoire'.

9

The Marginalization of 17 October 1961 (1961–1968)

This chapter discusses further key developments that contributed to the political marginalization of the October events. To do so, we need to extend the time-scale after October 1961 to include the five-month period of greater anti-fascist unity on the left separating 17 October from Charonne (8 February 1962). This allows for a clearer understanding of the context in which the Charonne killings—and the reactions to them—took place, and a firmer assessment of the markedly more significant protests after Charonne than after 17 October. The analysis then follows the impact of the decision by the Communist left to commemorate Charonne, a politically charged investment that further eclipsed the visibility of 17 October, giving the two events very different afterlives. Other political developments in spring and summer 1962 further reinforced the highly limited 'space' for memories and public evocations of 17 October in the 1960s and beyond: within Algeria, as a consequence of President Ahmed Ben Bella's controversial ascension to and subsequent consolidation of power at the political expense of the Fédération de France; within France, due to the end-of-conflict amnesty policy.

NOVEMBER 1961 TO FEBRUARY 1962: TOWARDS A DIFFICULT ANTI-FASCIST UNITY

The key transitional period between October 1961 and February 1962 displaced the question of anti-Algerian violence and deferred the political effect of the 17 October events, a sign of the repression's very diffuse impact on the left.[1] However, before turning to this question, we need to discuss how the anti-fascist dynamic of this late colonial war context made the political landscape of the left quite unlike that since 1954. Anti-fascism often acted as a 'lowest common denominator' of political mobilization within a defensive strategy deployed by the left, along with centrists. Its core values were the defence of Republican

[1] The term 'displaced' is from Mann, 'Les Manifestations', 300; the term 'deferred' is from Tartakowsky, *Les Manifestations de rue*, 692.

democracy in the face of a perceived threat from forces of the far right (or Gaullist right), the term 'fascist' having a polemical function to discredit political adversaries, and not necessarily corresponding to any well-defined notion of fascism.[2] The key references to ground and legitimize such protest were the 12 February 1934 anti-fascist protests, the Popular Front, the Resistance, and, closer to hand, the anti-putsch mobilizations of April 1961. What did the political actors of the left understand this form of 'fascism' to be? How did 'fascism' manifest itself? How was it best to unite against this danger?

Participants in this broad anti-fascist movement understood differently where the fascist danger stemmed from. First, all political actors viewed the OAS as a danger to democracy and fundamental liberties, its existence and violence compromising a swift conclusion to the Algerian War that all wanted. The OAS was going against the will of the nation expressed in referendum in favour of self-determination for Algeria. OAS bomb attacks on homes of left-wing intellectuals and politicians, attacks on left-wing council offices, death threats, and intimidation were seen as another step in the 'Algerianization' of metropolitan France, quite apart from OAS violence in Algeria.[3] Second—and more controversially—was the fear generated by the drift into autonomy and violence of sectors of state agencies: given the links between the OAS and the army in particular, and the evidence of May 1958 and April 1961, the dangers of a putsch by supporters of *Algérie française* were often evoked. Furthermore, the left judged the police and judicial apparatus reluctant to take firm measures against the OAS. Third, de Gaulle's personal role (or self-representation) as 'arbiter' between *Algérie française* and Communist poles was, by late December 1961, interpreted as compromising democracy.[4] Some on the centre left, however, maintained that de Gaulle's position represented a bulwark against fascism. All political actors nevertheless viewed the continuation of the war as increasing the dangers of fascism.

The shift towards an anti-fascist *rassemblement* involved more and more organizations and individuals sharing the first two positions identified here (i.e. opposition to OAS and anti-democratic practices of sectors of the state) and, crucially, seeing these positions as a tactical *priority* that needed to be translated into concrete action. This was arguably a process set off in part by 17 October and the reactions to that event. This shift also involved increasing numbers rallying to position three, seeing de Gaulle's Algerian policy and his fight against the OAS as ambivalent rather than reassuringly forceful. Brigitte Gaïti has argued that there was a swing (*basculement*) of political alliances throughout November–December 1961 to create a strong left-wing sector critical of de Gaulle's delay in ending the war.[5] Within union organizations or political parties, anti-fascism could overcome political differences on Algeria, or prevent the leadership being 'outflanked' by the more radical student and other young people's organizations. Several key days

[2] Since the war, writings on this period by former actors have suggested that the term 'fascist' was often overloaded.

[3] On the OAS, see Fleury, *Histoire secrète*.

[4] Brunet, *Charonne*, 104–5.

[5] Gaïti, 'Les Ratés de l'histoire', 27–9.

of anti-fascist action marked the period between November 1961 and February 1962 that will now be briefly analysed in turn.

On 18 November, a demonstration took place essentially involving student and youth groups close to the PCF, CGT, and PSU who were keen to riposte to the growing number of OAS attacks.[6] Approximately 10,000 demonstrators marched under banners demanding 'Peace in Algeria', in various localities in northern Paris while on the Left Bank a more radical, anti-colonial student demonstration took place, with students chanting 'Murderers, Papon's a murderer' at the police.[7] This represented a transitional phase in which some references to the 17 October violence were still present although rapidly losing visibility. The PCF and CGT's respective willingness to support a central Paris demonstration revealed a reprioritization of political energies, a noticeably different position in relation to the reactions after 17 October. The PCF appears to have decided in late November that it could no longer run the danger of being outflanked on its left. The PCF then decided on a day of action for 6 December 'against terrorism, the OAS and fascism'[8] that attracted 16,000 protestors in central Paris alone, and many more small-scale protests in the Paris suburbs and throughout France, as the PCF, CGT, and PSU combined forces.[9] The increasing levels of police violence that protestors faced brought greater left unity.[10] References to 17 October in the calls to demonstrate and strike became increasingly rare. Referring to 17 October, Pierre Marcilhacy, spokesman for the Senate's law commission, reminded the house on 30 November that 'there are sad deaths that, if I may say, should not be forgotten!'[11]

Whereas at national level the visibility of 17 October was fast diminishing, it continued to be a source of tensions within the URP-CFTC, whose regional conference on 2–3 December 1961 defeated a motion from affiliated steelworkers and the Renault section calling for the union to organize a mass protest in Paris against the OAS that the motion's sponsors had described as 'the big demonstration we've been waiting for so much since 17 October'.[12] Some union federations did remain well aware of the extent of police violence against Algerians, although they placed this repression within the wider anti-fascist discourse.[13] This was also the FLN's tactic at the time. A FLN communiqué dated 5 December used anti-fascist discourse and stressed the common interest French and Algerians had in seeing an end to the war, showing once more the FLN's ability to adapt its political discourse to fit the perceived priorities on the French left.[14]

[6] On this, see the CGS sessions of 15–16 Nov. 1961, *BMO* of 25 Nov. 1961, 575–8.

[7] *Le Monde* (21 Nov. 1961). [8] Tartakowsky, *Les Manifestations de rue*, 683.

[9] See ADSSD, CGT-UD Seine 49 J 488, 'Journée de la paix en Algérie: 19 décembre 1961', dossier 'Bilan par localités (6 décembre 1961)'; *L'Humanité* (7 Dec. 1961) and *Le Monde* (8 Dec. 1961). [10] Heurgon, *Histoire du P.S.U.*, 348.

[11] *JODP* (Senate), session of 30 Nov. 1961, 2271.

[12] URP-CFTC Archives, Box 7, 'Congrès URP-CTFC 02–03 décembre 1961', Dossier 'Déroulement du Congrès'.

[13] See ADSSD, CGT-UD Seine 49 J 488, File 'Journée Paix en Algérie 19/12/61'.

[14] BDIC 4 Delta 143 Réserve, 'Tracts à usage métropolitain 1959–1961'.

On 19 December, the anti-fascist day of action represented a quantitative leap in mobilization, attracting tens of thousands of demonstrators. It saw the return of demonstrations that sought not a fleeting manifestation of the defensive power of the left to contest and marginalize fascism (as had been the case on 1 and 18 November and 6 December), but a more united left march, in central Paris in particular.[15] The Paris region CGT alone counted 313 initiatives (*actions*) in 232 factories including 274 stoppages, 29 rallies, and 20,000–60,000 demonstrators marched in Paris.[16] However, violence marred these banned demonstrations.[17] Demonstrators who tried to reach the Hôtel de Ville from Bastille were met by police charges in the Marais. In the ensuing chaos, some 100 demonstrators were injured, including several members of the Conseil municipal de Paris and Conseil général de la Seine (CGS). Police hit many elderly people, kicking and clubbing them as they lay on the ground, forms of violence that would be repeated at Charonne. This police violence brought home to many on the left the way in which certain units of the Paris police were behaving. Writing in *Esprit*, Jean-Marie Domenach highlighted the violent role of the *brigades spéciales*.[18] Papon, on the other hand, blamed the protestors for the violence.[19] Papon's version met with derision since many of the CGS members had been at the demonstration the night before and been injured by the police, including the CGS president, Socialist Georges Dardel.

19 December had several main results. First, the PCF judged—no doubt accurately—that 19 December had signalled 'the progress of a unified front', one that the PCF felt more capable of controlling.[20] Jean-Paul Brunet argues that de Gaulle, in trying to separate the PCF from the rest of the left by repression and accusations of subversion, actually ended up bringing the left closer together.[21] The shift to greater suspicion of de Gaulle's motives constituted one key element within anti-fascism: late December was the high-point of anti-fascist mobilization prior to the post-Charonne ceremonies on 13 February 1962.[22]

The second main result of 19 December was to reveal to a wider public the ongoing crisis within the Paris police that the official cover-up over 17 October had failed to stem. However, internal police and press debates centred on fascist elements within the force, and the government's attitude toward anti-fascist demonstrators, further overshadowing the question of police violence against Algerians. Syndicat général de la police (SGP) union officials feared being marginalized from the anti-fascist movement and thought that the government and leading police officers' inaction in combating fascism proved the complicity

[15] Tartakowsky, *Les manifestations de rue*, 684.

[16] ADSSD, CGT-UD Seine, 49 J 488, 'Journée de la paix en Algérie: 19 décembre 1961', *Historique du 19/12/61*.

[17] See Brunet, *Charonne*, 93–101; Heurgon, *Histoire du P.S.U.*, 351–4.

[18] 'Journal à plusieurs voix', *Esprit*, 302 (Feb. 1962), 249.

[19] *BMO* Débats, 9 Jan. 1962, CGS sitting of 20 Dec. 1961, 961.

[20] PCF Archives, Décisions du Secrétariat, No 951, 27 Dec. 1961, 1.

[21] Brunet, *Charonne*, 104.

[22] Heurgon, *Histoire du P.S.U.*, 370.

of their hierarchical superiors with the fascist threat itself, whether by design or implication.[23] The events of 19 December brought such tensions to a head. Some SGP officials described police violence on 19 December as security force revenge on left-wingers for their post-17 October criticisms.[24] The hostile response from the left after the demonstrations appeared to confirm the SGP's worst fears that the SGP would become isolated from the left.[25] However, these fears proved largely unfounded: the union attracted considerable cross-party sympathy due to the sanctions its general secretary François Rouve faced. Rouve had publicly opposed the banning of the 19 December demonstration.[26] The 'Rouve Affair' attracted wide coverage in the national press between December 1961 and March 1962.[27] The sanctions—ending in full dismissal in February–March 1962—were seen by many commentators as a threat to union freedoms. Rouve interpreted the short-term context of tensions in the late-war period within the much longer term struggles between Republican and far-right, anti-Communist forces stretching back to the 1930s.[28] This highly troubled period would provide the context for the Charonne repression.

Early 1962 saw further developments on the anti-fascist front. The CGT's confederal newspaper judged in mid-January 1962 that: 'the fascist threat is born of colonial wars and the Algerian War especially: we therefore need to put an end to both, or, more precisely, to one via the other'.[29] This need for 'Peace', and an end to the war, was reinforced when the OAS stepped up its now daily violence to intimidate the left and Gaullists in metropolitan France as well as Algeria. Yet because of the persistent disunity within and across the Communist and (in particular) non-Communist left, unions and parties seemed incapable of translating their genuine concerns into mass anti-fascist action. The radical anti-colonial, revolutionary left highlighted the mainstream left's failure to demand independence for Algeria and suspected that anti-fascism was too insistent on opposition to the OAS rather than de Gaulle's role. [30]

Newer, more radical anti-fascist organizations thus sought to reinvest the inward-looking anti-fascist movement with third-worldist sentiment and ensure the protection against OAS attacks that the police seemed unwilling or unable to provide. The Front universitaire antifasciste, created in autumn 1961, brought together dissident Communist or Trotskyite students in the UEC, and those in the Étudiants socialistes unifiés and some left-wing Christians. The Front

[23] See the intervention of Chaunac in Archives SGP-FO, Conseil syndical mixte gradés/gardiens, 5 Dec. 1961, 10.

[24] Archives SGP-FO, Moulinet to CA of 21 Dec. 1961, 18. See also Monate, minutes of CAE of SGP-FO, 13 Nov. 1961, 1.

[25] Archives SGP-FO, minutes of CA of 21 Dec., 23 (Gommenginger).

[26] On Rouve, see Brunet, *Charonne*, 109–16 *passim*. [27] Ibid. 112.

[28] See 'Rouve: La police peut réduire l'OAS', *France-Observateur* (15 Mar. 1962), 12.

[29] *Le Peuple*, 645 (16–31 Jan. 1962), 30.

[30] See Marcel Péju, 'Au secours!', *Les Temps modernes*, 189 (Mar. 1962), 1194–6; François Maspero, 'Nous précisons . . . ', *Partisans*, 3 (Feb. 1962), 167–72.

universitaire antifasciste was interested in defending the Latin Quarter against the OAS and far right and was strongly in favour of Algerian independence.[31] In December 1961, the Ligue d'Action pour le Rassemblement antifasciste was formed (Sartre, Bourdet, Panijel), aiming to 'enable unified action from the French left against fascism, for solidarity with the Algerian people, and the democratization of public life'.[32] The PSU's own Groupes d'action et de résistance—only operational in March 1962—sought to complement the Front universitaire antifasciste's action by operating outside the Latin Quarter against the OAS.[33] While this multiplicity of initiatives further indicates the divisions of the left, analysts have underlined the longer term significance of this late-war activism amongst young people described as the 'Algerian' or 'post-Algerian generation' and whose concerns would later culminate in the student protests of May '68.[34]

Whereas awareness of the threat to democracy and opposition to the OAS and its tactics had become wider in the first weeks of 1962, the public manifestations of such feelings remained below the surface. However, an OAS bomb attack on 6 February seriously injured Delphine Renard, the daughter of the *concierges* of bomb target André Malraux. The news that a 4-year-old girl had been partially blinded and terribly disfigured, her picture in many papers, provoked a combined feeling of moral outrage and opposition to the OAS. Over a six-month period the press had recorded OAS violence that was evident for all to see, had affected very many personalities on the left, and had signified the need to end the war. Delphine Renard's case crystallized all of these developments and was thus 'readable' in a way that neither everyday police violence against Algerians, nor the specific violence of 17–20 October had been to the majority of Parisians. The Delphine Renard tragedy showed how far the crisis of colonialism had now come to affect metropolitan French citizens.

CHARONNE—EVENT AND IMPACT

The large discrepancy regarding the public impact of 17 October in relation to Charonne struck contemporary commentators and has continued to fascinate since. In political and media discourses, however, 'Charonne' commonly covers four aspects. First, it signifies the deaths of anti-fascist protestors on 8 February 1962. Second, it refers to the mass reactions to such events, culminating in the 13 February general strike and funerals alongside the political realignments such reactions provoked. 'Charonne' also refers to the commemorative investment of the Communist left in subsequent years. Finally, 'Charonne', has become a

[31] See Pattieu, *Les Camarades des frères*, 190–5.

[32] See *Vérité-Liberté*, 14 (Dec. 1961), 1.

[33] See Heurgon, *Histoire du P.S.U.*, 363–6.

[34] See Paul Thibaud, 'Génération algérienne', in Rioux, *La Guerre d'Algérie et les Français*, 613. See also Nicole de Maupeou-Abboud, *Ouverture du ghetto étudiant: La Gauche étudiante à la recherche d'un nouveau mode d'intervention politique (1960–1970)* (Paris: Éditions Anthropos, 1974).

common noun to represent gratuitous violence against protestors. It is with the first three of these meanings that we will be concerned here, starting with the demonstration.

The anti-fascist demonstration on 8 February attracted fewer protesters than on 19 December 1961:[35] the short notice and fears of police violence played their part. Such fears were sadly proved correct. Unable to protest at Bastille as initially intended, the five processions, made up of Communists and non-Communists, found themselves dispersed in the 11th and 12th arrondissements. One group of several thousand demonstrators found itself at the crossroads of the rue de Charonne and the boulevard Voltaire, where the order to disperse was given by the unions. Very shortly afterwards, the 31st compagnie d'intervention situated lower down the boulevard Voltaire charged into the crowd, *bidules* raised, and hit any demonstrators or passers-by of all ages with as much violence as they could, continuing to hit and kick them as they lay—sometimes inanimate—on the ground. In the ensuing chaos, some of the panicked crowd sought refuge at the mouth of the Charonne Métro station, where a pile of injured people formed on the steps, crushing many. Police continued to hit those on the top of this pile, throwing various objects onto them, such as heavy iron tree surrounds from the *boulevard*.[36] Most of the deaths occurred here, including those of Fanny Dewerpe, Suzanne Martorell, Anne-Claude Godeau, and 15-year-old Daniel Fery. At least one other person, Raymond Wintgens, died as police chased demonstrators throughout the area, following them into courtyards, cafés, and bars to club them repeatedly over the head. Protestors responded to this violence by fighting with police. In addition to the eight deaths among the protestors on the night (a ninth demonstrator, Maurice Pochard, was to die later), over one hundred passers-by and protestors were injured, some of them seriously.

How should we account for the nature and extent of this violence? As Olivier Fillieule has shown, violence on demonstrations depends on a range of factors, most notably at Charonne the following.[37] First, banned demonstrations often turn violent since police intervention is highly likely. By banning the demonstration, both the government and de Gaulle wanted to send out a message to the army that they would not tolerate or be pressured by Communist initiatives: the state media incorrectly presented the Charonne demonstrations as a solely Communist protest.[38] Second, police had received instructions to disperse the demonstrators—if necessary with considerable force.[39] Such 'intransigence' often leads to violence.[40] Third, we need to consider the reasons for the hostility of many police officers toward protestors at Charonne. Many members of the compagnies were former colonial soldiers who were viscerally anti-Communist.[41]

[35] Heurgon, *Histoire du P.S.U.*, 370.

[36] See Brunet, *Charonne*, 171–201 *passim*, on which the details in this paragraph are based.

[37] Olivier Fillieule, *Stratégies de la rue: Les Manifestations en France* (Paris: Presses de Sciences-Po, 1997), here esp. 325–34.

[38] Heurgon, *Histoire du P.S.U.*, 369–70; Brunet, *Charonne*, 127.

[39] Brunet, *Charonne*, 137–8.

[40] Fillieule, *Stratégies de la rue*, 329.

[41] See also Ch. 6.

As Part I showed, long-term repressive policing during the war had created a deeply entrenched culture of violence within the force, a modus operandi that would now be turned against the left. Given that the police felt aggrieved by the post-17 October press campaigns denouncing police violence, and that some officers were close to the OAS and pro-*Algérie française*, the demonstrators were considered as 'rogue' elements (*hors-la-loi*) against whom violence could be exerted with legitimacy. Officers in these units knew that their superiors would cover them. Since 17 October, there had been no purge of violent officers.[42] However, notwithstanding this direct continuity from 17 October, only one officer used his gun at Charonne, as opposed to many cases of shots fired at Algerians on 17 October. Furthermore, at Charonne there was much less police violence after demonstrators were detained.

Charonne immediately became a political 'affair', as arguments raged over the responsibilities for the deaths and exactly how these had occurred. The Communist left made campaigning a priority.[43] Greater unity on the left than in October 1961 aided such mobilization. Furthermore, campaigners after 8 February had considerable advantage over those protesting after 17 October. The closer unity of time and place allowed for a more focused debate. Charonne was also at the heart of the left's symbolic space between République and Nation. The immediately identifiable nature of the victims and their number are also in striking contrast to the various ways by which the police killed on 17 October and following days. French witnesses were generally less scared to come forward than Algerians after 17 October. At Charonne, the violence had affected not a marginalized, racialized social group that the majority of Parisians feared and disliked, or towards whom they were indifferent, but well-integrated members of the workers' movement. One of the dead, Jean-Pierre Bernard, was secretary of the PCF section of the 15th arrondissement.[44] Levels of indignation among the Renault-Billancourt workforce were much higher than after 17 October. Henri Benoîts, who worked at Renault—and who had been a witness on the 17 October demonstrations—states that, with Charonne, what resurfaced was a working-class 'Republican streak containing a whole series of references, including hostility to the police, that still had a resonance', resulting in the difference in reactions between 17 October and Charonne.[45]

The left skilfully organized a campaign underlining that three women and an adolescent had died. The dead victims and the most seriously injured were successfully 'individualized' and personalized, with their biographies, family, and professional circumstances dwelt on in detail, a tactic only seen for a few of the dead after 17 October.[46] Brochures and posters were produced with their

[42] See Ferri's intervention in Archives SGP-FO, minutes of CA of 28 Feb. 1962, 21.

[43] Danielle Tartakowsky, *Les Manifestations de rue*, 689, records 196 demonstrations over 5 days, in 134 towns subsequent to the Charonne killings.

[44] Brunet, *Charonne*, 225–6.

[45] Interview (J.H.), Issy-les-Moulineaux, 22 Nov. 2002.

[46] The most seriously injured person to survive the Charonne violence was an Algerian, Mohammed Aït Saada. See *L'Humanité* (22 Feb. 1962).

11. Huge crowds at the Place de la République attend the funeral procession of the Charonne victims, 13 February 1962: the tribute to the eight French militants contrasted with the lack of commemoration for the Algerian dead, which numbered over a hundred. (Georges Azenstarck, by permission of Getty Images.)

photographs, thus creating a framework conducive to remembering victims (see Photo 11). The success of this tactic was such that people who remember Charonne often still remember the names of some of the dead. As David Le Breton has argued: 'socially speaking, it is ridiculous to conceive of remembering faceless people'.[47] The SPF set in motion a large humanitarian and charitable operation to raise funds: the injured, and families of the dead received payments,

[47] David Le Breton, *Des visages: Essai d'anthropologie* (Paris: Métailié, 1992), 201.

and at least seventeen of the injured at Charonne received medical treatment in East Germany.[48]

Furthermore, media coverage after Charonne was extremely extensive.[49] The press, left-wing political parties, and trade unions often referred to the Charonne dead as 'martyrs', part of the 'people of Paris', heroes of the continuing struggle against the right and repressive state. Charonne therefore found echoes with previous police repression of the workers' movement and underlined the lasting centrality of the references to the national French working-class (narrowly defined as not of colonial origin) and trade union movement. Charonne was therefore politically 'readable' to the left since it opposed French metropolitan workers to the police, and politically 'safe' since, unlike after 17 October, there was no complicating factor of political identification or not with the FLN.

Capitalizing on this groundswell of public indignation, on 13 February 1962, a general strike brought Paris and much of France to a standstill, as five of the Charonne dead were buried at Père-Lachaise in the PCF section. The Paris mass demonstration and funeral ceremony (that *L'Humanité* on 14 February called 'grandiose, unforgettable'), attended by at least 500,000 people, constituted the largest public event in which any of those under the age of 35 would ever have participated (see Photo 11). In living memory, only the Liberation celebrations had been larger although, in political terms, 13 February 1962 was most closely linked to the anti-fascist demonstrations of 12 February 1934 following the violent clashes between the right, far right, and security forces on 6 February 1934. Indeed, *Le Monde* judged that Charonne was 'the bloodiest confrontation between police and demonstrators since 6 February 1934', passing over the 17 October 1961 repression.[50] As Casamayor reflected in *Esprit*, 'rather than watching the ceremony, it was a something one felt part of'.[51] With a few notable exceptions, this 'community' between 'observers' and participants on 13 February is in stark contrast to 17 October. Mobilizations after Charonne bypassed the official clampdown on street protests that had effectively neutralized the PCF and wider left during the Algerian War, hence the renewed energy that activists drew from this anti-fascist surge.

How successful were protests after Charonne in terms of establishing responsibility and seeking justice for the victims? With parliamentary and local assemblies in recess in February 1962, the press was therefore the focus of the debate even more than after 17 October, and the authorities seized the press where necessary (*L'Humanité*, *Libération*). Trade unions and other organizations (e.g. SPF, LDH) logically set out to challenge official versions by providing counter-testimonies

[48] See ADSSD, CGT-UD Seine 49 J 616, 'Charonne', see dossiers 'Justice', 'Plaquette', 'Départs des blessés en RDA', and 'Solidarité'.

[49] See the press of 14 Feb. 1962, in particular *L'Humanité* and *Le Monde*.

[50] *Le Monde* (11–12 Feb. 1962). This article does later mention 17 Oct. 1961.

[51] 'Journal à plusieurs voix', *Esprit*, 303 (Mar. 1962), 427–32, 427.

and collecting evidence of police brutalities.[52] On 9 February, trade unions organized a joint press conference to criticize the official version and demand the disbanding of the police units seen to have done the killings, calling for 'the dismissal and sentencing of all those guilty of the bloody repression'.[53]

The initial official version of the Charonne violence was that Communist 'agitators' amongst demonstrators had attacked police.[54] Interior Minister Roger Frey suggested that, in acting in this way, the PCF (which he blamed for the violence) was the equivalent of the OAS, talking on radio of 'extremes colluding against the Republic'.[55] Papon blamed demonstrators for having attended a banned demonstration.[56] When forced to provide answers, Papon argued, as after 17 October, that he could not respond to specific points since investigations were under way.[57] At the CGS session on 11 April 1962, PCF member Léopold Figuières ridiculed Papon's version of events.[58] In September 1962, Frey adopted a different position that aimed to exonerate the police by blaming the violence on OAS elements infiltrated into the police units.[59]

However, the fight for truth and justice in relation to Charonne would ultimately fail for a number of reasons. The notion of OAS responsibility was a convenient screen that Roger Frey used to deflect police responsibility: indeed, murder inquiries were only engaged in September 1962 once the OAS infiltration thesis had been advanced.[60] Judicial enquiries were extremely slow and incomplete, with no police officers explicitly denouncing their colleagues.[61] The 1966 amnesty law (see below) led to investigations ceasing upon dismissal of the case (*non-lieu*) and the fact that no specific individuals—OAS or police officers—had been identified by this time against whom to press charges.[62] The families of Charonne victims thereafter followed the civil path. On 12 June 1968, the courts divided civil responsibility for the deaths and injuries equally between the Paris City Council and demonstrators.[63] Some of the families received small amounts of compensation when an appeal confirmed this decision in 1969.[64] These court cases offered the possibility of keeping the affair in the public eye,[65] and the discussions regarding the responsibilities for the Charonne deaths periodically resurfaced in libel cases, a situation that would also apply to 17 October 1961.[66]

[52] See ADSSD, Archives CGT-UD Seine, 49 J 616, 'Charonne', dossier 'Témoignages'.
[53] Ibid., dossier 'Conférence de presse du 09/02/62', 5 pp.
[54] For a useful summary, see *Le Monde* (25–6 Feb. 1962). See also Brunet, *Charonne*, 249.
[55] Speech reproduced in *Combat* (10–11 Feb. 1962). See also *Le Monde* (11–12 Feb. 1962).
[56] See CGS, *BMO*, 24 Feb. 1962, written question 66 with reply (Bourdet-Papon), 467.
[57] See *BMO*, 19 Apr. 1962, CMP session of 9 Apr. 1962, 169.
[58] *BMO*, 21 Apr. 1962, 185. For the debates that day, ibid. 157–8, 185–8.
[59] See Michel Levine, *Affaires non classées: Enquêtes et dossiers de la Ligue des droits de l'Homme* (Paris: Fayard, 1973), 107–19.
[60] Brunet, *Charonne*, 291–2.
[61] Ibid. 278–82.
[62] See Levine, *Affaires non classées*, 102–3; Brunet, *Charonne*, 293–4.
[63] See *Le Monde* (14 June 1968).
[64] See Brunet, *Charonne*, 295–6; Levine, *Affaires non classées*, 104–6.
[65] See ADSSD, Archives CGT-UD Seine, 49 J 616, dossier 'Justice'.
[66] See Brunet, *Charonne*, 281–2.

EVOCATIONS OF CHARONNE—WITH OR WITHOUT 17 OCTOBER?

The more radical anti-colonial left criticized the considerable disparity in reactions between Charonne and 17 October. Writing in *Témoignage chrétien*, Hervé Bourges regretted that 'it took a young girl to lose her sight to bring the people of Paris out of their lethargy. Until then, neither the horrors of an "endless war" nor the Algerian blood shed on Paris pavements on 20 October [*sic*]' had been capable of stirring them.[67] The February–March 1962 edition of *Vérité-Liberté* published a photo of the 13 February funeral cortège under which was marked: 'And the victims of 17 October?' In the same edition, Pierre Vidal-Naquet asked: 'So who attended the funerals of the 17 October victims?'[68] At the 13 February funerals, only the URP-CTFC representative, Robert Duvivier, made the link between 17 October and 8 February.[69]

However, for organizations that had criticized the October repression as a sign of a threat to democracy and part of a critique of the Gaullist state apparatus, Charonne and 17 October were periodically mentioned together in 1962–3. Those organizations (e.g. URP-CFTC, SPF, PCF, CGT) heavily critical of state violence had previously underlined that anti-Algerian police violence could then extend to French workers (see Chapter 8). For Alain Guérin in *L'Humanité*, 'Papon and Frey's record in the anti-democratic struggle is remarkable, with the deaths and innumerable Algerians tortured in October, the violence in December, and the February victims.'[70] André Wurmser was sued for libel after writing in October 1962 that with the 'massacres' of 17 October and Charonne, 'Frey has mixed French with Algerian blood on his own hands'.[71] The URP-CFTC judged that: 'the attitude of some police officers during these demonstrations [*Charonne*] confirms our previous analyses of the anti-Algerian repression in autumn 1961'.[72]

Following Charonne, the AGTA sought to tap into the anti-fascist climate: 'These policemen who have just assassinated 8 French workers had already got their hand in during the peaceful demonstrations by Algerians workers on 17 October when dozens of us were cowardly slaughtered.' Showing its critical position toward the French left, the AGTA also judged, however, that 'it's because the French people and workers have been incapable of stopping the Algerian War when they should have that it's now taking root in their own territory'.[73]

[67] 'Le Réveil du peuple' (16 Feb. 1962), 3. Such confusion of dates regarding 17 Oct.—even from those like Bourges sympathetic to Algerians—was commonplace.

[68] Pierre Vidal-Naquet, in *Vérité-Liberté*, 16–17 (Feb.–Mar. 1962), 1.

[69] See *8 février–13 février 1962*, supplement to *Paris-Syndical*, 11 (Mar. 1962), 2.

[70] Article entitled 'FREY, démission! PAPON, révocation', 19 Feb. 1962.

[71] Article entitled 'Ah, vous êtes Frey', front page of *L'Humanité* (18 Oct. 1962). See also Brunet, *Charonne*, 281, for details of Wurmser's conviction on 24 Nov. 1964.

[72] *8 février–13 février 1962*.

[73] 'Déclaration' dated 10 Feb. 1962, in IHS, Archives Confédérales CGT, Box 'Guerre d'Algérie II, Coupures de presse'.

Shot with the help of the FLN, Jacques Panijel's clandestine film *Octobre à Paris* was being completed in February 1962 when the Charonne killings occurred. It closes with the narrator saying: 'The door is closing on the Algerians. But don't go! 17 October is continuing! The door is going to re-open on us, who are not filthy Arabs, who were not Yids (*youpins*), twenty years ago!'[74]

Panijel's film, made between November 1961 and March 1962, was seized on its first public showing on 9 October 1962,[75] and at this time the film attracted a certain amount of media attention. The film had already had an eventful existence, having been shot clandestinely in various suburban locations (Nanterre, Gennevilliers, Vitry) with the cooperation of the FLN, and shown at the Venice film festival in the summer of 1962. Panijel, a former Resistance fighter who had been tortured, was a member of the Comité Maurice Audin and had witnessed the 17 October demonstrations. The film portrays the context of terror in which Algerians had been living in Paris (since 1957), recreating the planning of 17 October, the events of that evening, and the physical, mental, and material aftermath. Panijel had deliberately sought out those Algerians who could 'explain the repressive system', and 'who had been tortured or thrown into the Seine before 17 October to explain why this demonstration was decided upon', the aim being to give voice to the victims of the repressive system. Panijel calls 17 October a 'State crime' and is therefore one of a type, rather than being a uniquely French phenomenon.[76]

CHARONNE AND ITS AFTERLIVES, 1962–1968

After 1961, only a very small number of anti-racist, anti-colonial organizations, networks, and individuals in France evoked 17 October. In October 1962, the MRAP newspaper *Droit et liberté* carried an anonymous article on the subject, accompanied by a Kagan photograph.[77] In *Témoignage chrétien*, Jean Carta spoke of Jacques Panijel's film, calling it 'the miserable lament of fear that had been overcome, and of bravery'.[78]

When the mainstream left did mention 17 October in the earlier 1960s, it was usually to accompany the February anniversary of Charonne: 17 October had no commemorative autonomy of its own. As we have seen, the only lasting theme within which there was 'space' to evoke 17 October was the critique of the violence of the Gaullist state and the key ministerial personnel who remained in post—here anti-Gaullist memory being mobilized to critique institutional

[74] Scenario reproduced in *Image et son*, 169 (Mar. 1963), 2–23, 22. See also René Vautier, *Caméra citoyenne*: *Mémoires* (Rennes: Éditions Apogée, 1998), 99–108.

[75] See Einaudi, *Octobre 1961*, 341–2; see also 'Entretien avec C. Benayoun', *Carnet d'échanges*, 1 (May 1999), 47–52.

[76] Interview (J.H.) with Jacques Panijel, Paris, 21 Feb. 2002.

[77] No. 213, 15 Oct.–15 Nov. 1962, 3.

[78] *Témoignage chrétien*, 954 (19 Oct. 1962), 16–17. On the polemical reception of the film by the radical *Partisans* revue in 1962–3, see Einaudi, *Franc-tireur*, 123–6.

continuity. In February 1963 in particular, a number of trade union documents referred to both killings and the need for justice for the families of victims, rather than this being a specific memorialization of the victims of 17 October. A joint document published by the local unions CGT, CFTC, FO, FEN, and the UNEF demanded justice for the families of the Charonne dead and injured, and called for 'those guilty of the repression, in particular that against Algerians on 17 October 1961 in Paris, to be sought out and punished' and for a purge of dangerous elements of the police and army.[79] The CGT's Paris publication spoke of the links between OAS and the assassination of Algerians on 17 October 1961.[80] However, as the 1960s progressed, mentions of 17 October when commemorating Charonne diminished significantly.

The PCF, CGT, and SPF took the decision to commemorate Charonne with immediate effect. Commemorations of Charonne attracted a widespread response in Paris and nationally, with a well-organized annual commemorative programme. On the first anniversary of Charonne, there were commemorations at workplaces on 8 February, but the authorities banned a gathering at Charonne, although *L'Humanité* claimed some 100,000 people attended the authorized ceremony at Père-Lachaise on 13 February.[81] The PCF portrayed the ceremonies under the sign of 'anti-fascist unity'.[82] Lower key commemorations subsequently took place every year at Père-Lachaise.[83]

Why did the Communist left in particular grant Charonne such commemorative attention?[84] The question is important, since memory is notoriously selective, and the memory of political parties in particular. Communist prioritizing of Charonne over 17 October mirrored that of the left—and French society—more generally, coming to 'layer over' the memory of 17 October. Particular events lend themselves to commemoration because of their lasting political significance that, in the case of the PCF and Charonne, was multiple at the time and has been since. First, Brigitte Gaïti has argued that the reactions to 17 October probably marked the start of the greater unity on the left that Charonne came to seal (and, later, symbolize): indeed, the political results of 17 October were deferred and displaced, as we have seen. However, the 17 October demonstrations had taken place in the absence of the left and therefore constituted an 'impure' founding date from which to trace this greater unity retrospectively.[85] Evocation of 17 October could bring no political capital to French left-wing political parties or trade unions, as it reminded them of earlier equivocation on the specific question of support for the FLN. If the disunity of the

[79] *Février 1962 Février 1963*, in URP-CFTC, Box 59, dossier 'Événements 8/13 février 1962'.

[80] '13 février Hommage du Peuple de Paris aux martyrs de février 1962', *Le Travailleur parisien*, NS 93 (29 Jan. 1963).

[81] See *L'Humanité* (7, 9, and 14 Feb. 1963) and ADSSD, Archives CGT-UD Seine, 49 J 621, 'Charonne: commémoration 1962'.

[82] See Étienne Fajon in *L'Humanité* (7 Feb. 1963).

[83] According to *Le Monde* (15 Feb.), 11,000 people attended the 13 Feb. 1964 commemoration in Paris.

[84] While the key carrier of this memory was the PCF, both the CGT and SPF also played an important role, hence the use here of the more generic term 'Communist' rather than solely 'PCF'.

[85] Gaïti, 'Les Ratés de l'histoire', 28.

French left no doubt helped the state cover-up after 17 October, the regaining of French left unity could not centre on the question of Algerian independence but, rather, on anti-fascism. Because of Charonne, the left was more united but this situation merely confirmed and facilitated the very disappearance of 17 October that the state cover-up had already gone a good way to ensure.

Second, with the left feeling ashamed about the lack of response after the 17 October events, Charonne symbolized a more 'presentable' event over which the PCF could claim political ownership. Tellingly, in keeping alive the memory of Charonne, the PCF implicitly celebrated the fact that it had been the key instigator of the 8 February demonstration.[86] In the commemorations of Charonne, the PCF highlighted the 13 February burials as much as the 8 February massacre, since it was the impact of the killings at Charonne (as opposed to Delphine Renard's injuries) that provided the key catalyst to true unitary action on the left. Furthermore, the PCF could retrospectively present Charonne as a key 'stage' in the conclusion of 'Peace in Algeria'—as a belated vindication of its strategy to induce mass action to pressure de Gaulle in that direction.[87] Unlike 17 October, Charonne could therefore be 'localized' or situated in French memory, to use Halbwachs's term, not only because of the recognizable spatial location where the violence took place, but also because it could be situated within the longer term transmitted collective memory of the French workers' movement dating back to the Paris Commune (if not back to 1789).[88] If Charonne then entered the PCF's official memory, it also found resonance within the memory of PCF activists and sympathizers, in this instance a mutually reinforcing 'privileged moment' in the Party's recent history, thus explaining the memory's relative longevity, sustained by the Party's large size in the 1960s.[89] A 'dominant' memory on the left would henceforth largely obscure 17 October 1961. Charonne, rather than 17 October, came to symbolize police violence during the Algerian War,[90] a point that the far left would remind the PCF of during and after May '68 (see Chapter 10). Charonne and 17 October have often been parallel and competing memories, constituting one key strand of the politics of memory of 17 October.

THE VIOLENT END-OF-WAR CONTEXT, JANUARY–JULY 1962

These narratives of the French left should not hide the police violence against Algerians in France that, although diminished, persisted into 1962. Some of this violence reached media and public attention, in particular in March–June 1962.

[86] Sandrine Ségui, 'Les Communistes français en guerre d'Algérie: Histoire, mémoires et représentations (1954–1992)', Ph.D. dissertation (Université de Provence, 1994), 462.
[87] See PCF Archives, Décisions du Secrétariat, no. 967, 27 Feb. 1962, 1.
[88] Halbwachs, *Les Cadres sociaux*, 126–7, 143.
[89] Lavabre, *Le Fil rouge*, 32.
[90] Ross, *May '68*, 47–8.

Again, only by extending the period covered by the analysis can we gain an idea of what the first six months of 1962 would have been like for Algerians. The many continuing problems that they faced were likely to reduce the centrality of the 17 October 1961 demonstrations, beyond the cases of those families of the dead or 'disappeared'.

As previously, the chronology of such violence articulated closely with political and diplomatic initiatives. The OAS and OAS-sympathizers in the police worked to compromise the ceasefire of 19 March 1962 between the French state and the GPRA. On 30 May 1962, the FF-FLN published a detailed seven-page document entitled *La répression et les provocations policières contre l'émigration algérienne, depuis le cessez-le-feu* ('Repression and police provocation against Algerian emigration since the ceasefire').[91] This document listed at least 40 Algerian dead and 60 injured (without counting 'disappearances') since the ceasefire. The document stated that killings by police and Messalists (i.e. pro-MNA activists) were still taking place in open daylight as during 'the period when the repression was at its peak'. The FLN denounced what it termed the increasing collusion between 'Messalist-*harkis* and fascist police networks' to derail the Évian agreement.[92] While most examples detail what appear to be FPA/MNA violence in the northern towns of Roubaix, Tourcoing, and Maubeuge, the document lists the cases of several Algerians picked up at random by police units in April 1962 only to be beaten up and left on waste ground in the Paris suburbs. On 13 May 1962, a public meeting in Paris heard Messaoudi Zitouni, spokesperson for M'hamed Yazid, GPRA Information Minister, read an official GPRA declaration. The declaration warned that the GPRA might consider ordering Algerian migrants to return to Algeria unless French authorities took measures to allow 'the Algerian colony to live in conditions other than anxiety and terror'.[93]

The FLN was not alone in such denunciations. The anti-racist association, MRAP, gave details of several Algerians who had been picked up by police in Pigalle in early May 1962 and subsequently beaten up in the Bois de Boulogne by police who had threatened to shoot them.[94] A number of serious incidents occurred in the 18th arrondissement on 9–11 June 1962, as police dispersed and detained Algerians who were registering for the referendum vote on Algeria. Delegations of Algerians would then visit the relevant police stations to ensure that those arrested were not being mistreated or worse. Such events illustrate how the late-war period had affected Algerians, so terrified were they of arrest. A written question tabled by five local councillors complained of the police's 'unacceptable brutal behaviour that unfortunately recalled the tragic events

[91] In ACON CFTC, 6 H 20, Secrétariat confédéral. On the late-war context for Algerians in France, see Amiri, *La Bataille*, 195–200.

[92] *La Répression et les provocations policières*, 1.

[93] IHS, CGT Archives Confédérales, Box 'Paix en Algérie 1959–1962', dossier 'Accord Évian'. See also Ali Haroun, *L'Été de la discorde: Algérie 1962* (Algiers: Casbah Éditions, 2000), 48–50.

[94] *Droit et liberté*, 209 (15 May–15 June 1962), 4.

(*journées*) of October 1961'.[95] On 11 June, a police officer shot an arrested, unarmed Algerian, L. Smaïl, from behind, injuring him in the thigh, as he was being led into a police van in the 19th arrondissement.[96] The AGTA called this violence 'the bloody prolongation of 17 October 1961'.[97] According to the SPF: 'Algerians are still being arrested and clubbed on the streets of our towns.'[98] In general, there appears to have been resentment from police that they could no longer operate in as violent a manner as previously due to the ceasefire: this redefinition of the framework for police intervention brought considerable further tension between police and Algerians in Paris.[99]

Unfortunately, the violence described above pales in comparison to what was occurring in Algeria at the same time, as the OAS sought to provoke the Arab–Berber population and the French military. There were over forty deaths on the rue d'Isly, Algiers, on 26 March as the army fired on pro-OAS demonstrations.[100] Violence marked all main Algerian towns, with disappearances, bomb attacks, small- and larger scale killings perpetrated mainly by the OAS, but also by Algerian nationalists. OAS attacks—and the protests against them—also continued in metropolitan France. In Algeria, the end of the war brought reprisals against remaining Messalists and the killings of tens of thousands of *harkis*, as well as reprisals against *pieds-noirs*.[101] For Algerians in France, the situation therefore remained difficult, just as for Algerians in Algeria, the situation, with the descent into quasi civil war, remained critical. Evocations of 17 October, already problematical because of the GPRA's strategic interests in late 1961, would be even more politically 'illegitimate' on the Algerian side precisely because of the outcome of the battle for power engaged over the summer crisis of 1962 within the FLN, ALN, and GPRA leadership.

THE FLN AND OCTOBER 1961 (1962–1966)

Algeria gained independence in July 1962. Yet, what was, for obvious reasons, a major change in the political context, further marginalized the visibility of the 17 October demonstrations. While we have seen the at times strained relations between the FF-FLN leadership and the GPRA, the FF-FLN nevertheless viewed the GPRA under Ben Khedda as representative of the diversity of the Algerian people and as the body having negotiated the Évian agreement. The FF-FLN viewed with suspicion the rise of the freed leader Ahmed Ben Bella, allied with

[95] *BMO* of 12–13 June 1962, 1492 (CMP written question No 952).
[96] See APP-HA109, dossier 'Cessez-le-feu. Incidents des 9 au 12 juin 1962', telegram dated 11 June 1962.
[97] Title of AGTA flyer dated 12 June 1962, see police note of 15 June in APP-HA30, 'Propagande indépendantiste. Tracts, affiches, publications'.
[98] *La Défense*, 453 (July 1962), 9.
[99] See APP-HA108, 'Accords d'Évian'.
[100] Stora, *La Gangrène*, 105–8.
[101] Ibid. 200–2.

Colonel Houari Boumediene, and opposed Ben Bella's apparent bid for leadership as an overconcentration of power. [102] By early July 1962 such tensions had erupted into the open, as Ben Bella and Boumediene, with the backing of the external forces (ALN), found themselves in a superior military position to the depleted resources of the military regions in Algeria. Ben Bella and Boumediene were therefore able to slowly garner wider political support over the summer from their base in the western city of Tlemcen. This process saw a descent into anarchy and internecine political violence.

Such tensions found an echo amongst the Algerian disapora in France, with pro-Ben Bella supporters opposing those loyal to the FF-FLN leadership (i.e. the GPRA). By early September 1962, the transitional Political Bureau, with Ben Bella firmly in the ascendancy, was able to marginalize those within the FLN who had not supported him. The FF-FLN therefore received no allocated seats in the Constituent National Assembly, and the six current or past members of the FF-FLN leadership who were elected had little influence. No former FF-FLN leaders were in government, and some were part of the barely tolerated political opposition to Ben Bella.[103] Ben Bella then sent loyal cadres to France to disband the FF-FLN, replacing it with the satellite Amicale (association) designed to keep in line the Algerian migrant communities. Algiers viewed with suspicion the loyalty of the emigrant community in France that had been Messalist before being FLN.[104] The diversity of Algerian nationalism, before, during, and after the War of Independence, was a phenomenon that few post-independence Algerian regimes could tolerate until at least the late 1980s. In addition, most Algerians in France had remained loyal to the FF-FLN leadership (and hence the GPRA) in the struggle with Ben Bella.[105] Furthermore, there was some feeling that Algerians in France had experienced an 'easier time' during the war than those in Algeria, leading some in the FLN to describe nationalist militants in France in disparaging terms as the 'Champs-Élysées militants'.[106] The role of Algerians in France during the war was downplayed by the Algerian state that prioritized its memorial initiatives on armed resistance in Algeria. Such conflicts placed the former French FLN support networks in a difficult position. For example, Jacques Panijel's film *Octobre à Paris* was not widely shown in Algeria.

Ben Bella's leadership (until June 1965) saw further steps that might alienate many Algerians in France. While his espousal of socialism and worker self-management (*autogestion*) would have been attractive in theory, it centred on agricultural rather than industrial production and saw the land workers as the key actors of the Revolution, whereas Algerians in France were increasingly part

[102] Stora, *Ils venaient d'Algérie*, 393–4. See also Meynier, *Histoire intérieure*, 637–76.

[103] Haroun, *L'Été de la discorde*, 178–9, 197–9.

[104] See Stora, *La Gangrène*, chs. 8–12, 21.

[105] See Pierre Dubois's article on the AGTA's opposition to Ben Bella in *Témoignage chrétien* 954 (19 Oct. 1962), 4. See also Stora, *Ils venaient d'Algérie*, 392–8, 418–20.

[106] Interview (J.H.) with FLN militant Mohamed Ghafir, Saint-Ouen, 24 Oct. 2002. Ghafir was one of the organizers of the Oct. 1961 demonstrations.

of the urban working class.[107] Ben Bella was firmly attached to an Arab–Muslim identity for Algeria, a conception at odds with the country's linguistic and cultural diversity, and political pluralism. Indeed, Kabyle–Berbers remained numerous amongst Algerians in France, and Kabyle opposition to Ben Bella in Algeria, centring around the figure of Hocine Aït Ahmed, continued for several years. The Algerian state, with the one-party FLN, then sought to impose a restrictive vision of the Algerian nation on the people, making the narratives of 'cultural renewal' within those of 'national renewal' unattractive to many migrants (and other groups), notwithstanding the genuine attachment to the cause of Algerian independence amongst migrants.[108] As we shall see, this tension between the Algerian state and its people is a recurrent theme in the Algerian politics of memory of the war. Post-independence FLN discourse had to move from enunciating a vision of a future state that could ensure the rights and dignity denied under colonialism to legitimizing its conception of a nation-state that would be judged, in part, on its inclusiveness.

For the first two years after independence, there seems to have been little trace of 17 October in official Algerian publications. Passages in the Algiers Charter of July 1964 (setting out the political, economic, social, and cultural direction for the country) did not mention 17 October, but did refer to the December 1960 demonstrations in Algiers.[109] French police reports detail the strained political climate between pro- and anti-Ben Bellist factions amongst the Paris Algerian communities in the years 1962–5.[110] In April 1964, the French police picked up a reference to the October 1961 demonstrations in the new Amicale publication, *Al-Djazaïri* (The Algerian). The article, by Mohamed Cherif, claimed that those on the demonstrations were militants and not, as various French groups had represented them at the time, 'the passive victims of a pogrom or helplessly driven by despair'. For Cherif, 'the demonstration played an entirely positive role in the Algerian revolutionary dynamic', and was comparable historically to the December 1960 demonstrations in Algeria and had constituted 'a political act of prime importance', although this evocation deliberately situated political activism in France in relation to the 'main focus' of wartime nationalist activism in Algeria.[111]

Pro-Ben Bella sources could therefore evoke 17 October, with an insistence on the specific date since the aim was to celebrate the anti-colonial symbolism of the demonstration more than the repression it met. Perhaps the lengthiest evocation

[107] See John Ruedy, *Modern Algeria: The Origins and Development of a Nation* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1992), 200–5.

[108] The terms are from Joshua Cole, 'Remembering the Battle of Paris. 17 October 1961 in French and Algerian Memory', *French Politics, Culture and Society*, 21/3 (Fall 2003), 21–50, here 30–1.

[109] *La Charte d'Alger: Ensemble de textes adoptés par le 1er Congrès du Parti du FLN, 16–21 juillet 1964* (Algiers: FLN, Commission centrale d'orientation, 1964), 24.

[110] APP-HA60, dossier 'SAT-FMA Conférences (1961–1965)', reports dated 2 Apr. 1963, 7 May 1963, 11 Feb. 1964, 6 Aug. 1964, 3 Dec. 1964.

[111] APP-H1B35, dossier 'Affaires générales—Résidus'. The article appeared in *Al-Djazaïr*, 7 (14 Apr. 1964).

of the 17 October events before the late 1960s appeared in a book by Tayeb Belloula, published in 1965 by the official Algerian publishing house. Belloula states that 17 October 'remains unforgettable and ingrained in the memories of Algerians who experienced it; the demonstration is to Algerians living in France what the December 1960 protests are to the entire Algerian people'. Thirteen pages are devoted to 17 October, repeating elements of Cherif's article. Belloula then judges that '17 October 1961 represents the most significant political act of Algerian emigration at the same time as it is representative of its participation in the struggle for the liberation of Algeria'.[112] The book clearly asserts the Ben Bellist position dominant at the time, representing those in France hostile to Ben Bella in 1962 as a minority.[113] We therefore need to underline the context in which the October demonstrations were evoked during 1962–5, rather than their total official occultation, although the real change in importance accorded migration, and the decision to officially commemorate 17 October, would have to wait until after the Boumediene coup in June 1965.[114]

Further factors intervened to lessen the visibility of 17 October in the first years of independence. However much Ben Bella may have criticized French neocolonialism, he knew Algeria needed French support (*coopération*) in rebuilding Algeria's infrastructure after its near decimation during the late-war period, and that this needed a minimal level of good relations between the two countries.[115] Algiers was therefore unlikely to pursue the matter of French violence against Algerians during the war since amnesties covered most of these crimes. The continuing presence of hundreds of thousands of Algerians in France was a sign of Algeria's lasting economic problems, although official Algerian discourses portrayed such migrants' spatial separation from Algeria as temporary. The question of the place, role, and status of Algerians in France soon became a major diplomatic issue between the two countries.[116]

AMNESTIES

Joël Candau has suggested that 'we may learn more about a society by thinking about what it doesn't commemorate rather than what it does'.[117] This applies to France as much as to Algeria. The French political context in and after 1962 removed evocations of the state terror of the Algerian War. The most important piece of amnesty legislation concerning the various forms of police and army violence analysed in this book came into effect as early as the decree

[112] Tayeb Belloula, *Les Algériens en France. Leur passé. Leur participation à la lutte de libération nationale. Leurs perspectives* (Algiers: Éditions nationales algériennes, 1965), 85, 98–9.

[113] Ibid. 102 and 106–36. [114] See Ch. 10.

[115] Valérie-Barbara Rosoux, *Les Usages de la mémoire dans les relations internationales: Le Recours au passé dans la politique étrangère de la France à l'égard de l'Allemagne et de l'Algérie, de 1962 à nos jours* (Brussels: Bruylant, 2001), 96–101. [116] See Viet, *La France immigrée*, 221–54, 279–95.

[117] Candau, *Mémoire et identité*, 147.

of 22 March 1962.[118] This decree amnestied all 'deeds' (*faits*) committed in relation to the repression of the Algerian 'insurrection' since 1954. This decree only applied to Algeria, and was extended to cover metropolitan France (for both French security forces and Algerian nationalists) on 14 April 1962.[119] The authorities presented these initiatives as the logical 'balance' to the amnestying of all Algerians who had taken part in nationalist activities and violence. However, rather than bilateral—part of the Évian Accords—this measure was in fact unilateral, since France had not engaged to undertake such measures: the Évian Agreement involved an undertaking that the newly independent Algerian state would not judicially pursue any French military personnel, just as France undertook not to do likewise with ALN-FLN personnel. This additional amnesty measure attracted widespread condemnation from the anti-torture and anti-colonial movements, all the more so since the amnesty did not cover those who had worked with the FLN or deserters from the French army, or those who had refused to serve (*insoumis*).[120] The lawyer Robert Badinter pointed out the ethical question of the French state legally absolving those who had committed terrible crimes in its name, arguing that France should not give up the right to judge its own nationals.[121]

The extent to which opponents of the 1962 amnesty focused on torture is evidence of the considerable place this issue occupied in French society. [122] The 17 October 1961 repression was mostly absent from such debates, and would continue to be so during later amnesty discussions: its centrality is a product of the 1990s and it would be anachronistic to suggest otherwise. Such amnesties helped to cover up the realities of and responsibilities for the system of which the 17 October repression was an example. The Comité Maurice Audin, in its opposition to the forms taken by the amnesty, nonetheless mentioned both 17 October and Charonne, while insisting that, 'by seeking to make it impossible for French people to realize what crimes were committed in their name, such crimes could be legitimated in later years'.[123] This argument drew on a well-established theme of anti-amnesty campaigning from the 1950s by underlining the moral caution that amnesties gave to perpetrators and the concomitantly negative message this sent to their victims.[124] Raphaëlle Branche has shown how the 1962 amnesty measures constituted a bid to appease the military (and police) and protect them from any claims from victims and their

[118] No. 62–328, *Journal officiel: Lois et décrets* (23 Mar. 1962), 3144.

[119] Stéphane Gacon, *L'Amnistie: De la Commune à la guerre d'Algérie* (Paris: Seuil, 2002), 258.

[120] Ibid. 259–62.

[121] See 'Détournement d'amnistie', *L'Express* (10 May 1962). See also René-William Thorp, 'L'Amnistie des gardiens de l'ordre', *Le Monde* (21 June 1962).

[122] See Branche, *La Torture*; Vidal-Naquet, *La Torture*.

[123] Extract from the Comité's deposition to the Council of State, 18 June 1962, reproduced in *Le Monde* (28 June 1962).

[124] Olivier Lalieu, 'L'Invention du devoir de mémoire', *Vingtième siècle: Revue d'histoire*, 69 (Jan.–Mar. 2001), 83–94.

families.[125] Electoral concerns also played their part in the timing of the amnesty measures.[126]

During the 1960s, further amnesty legislation intervened, as former OAS supporters campaigned for 'justice' and the need for France to 'move on' after the war and regain a national unity that the last years of the war in particular had severely compromised. In December 1964, an amnesty cleared most *pieds-noirs* guilty of violence. In 1966, those guilty of 'subversion' (i.e. the OAS)—except the OAS leaders—received amnesties. This law also covered the remaining *porteurs de valises*, *insoumis*, and army deserters. The 1968 law covered the heads of the OAS and the putschist generals, as part of a wish to bring national unity after the unrest of May '68.[127] The need to regain national unity would be put forward repeatedly in such debates: as Justice Minister Jean Foyer explained to the Assemblée nationale on 17 December 1964: 'the amnesty is a measure justified by national interest'. Foyer expressed his relief that 'time has passed and begun its work of forgetting'.[128] As Senator Pierre Marcilhacy put it: 'France wants to forget. It wants to turn the page, and live in the future rather than the painful contemplation of the past', showing how far the attitude of politicians previously critical of state violence had shifted, and reflecting a wider desire to move on after the war that applied to most of French society.[129]

The practical effects of such amnesty legislation would be wide-ranging. As we have seen, police, army, and judiciary had been anticipating amnesty legislation to slow down investigations in 1961–2.[130] The amnesty ended any criminal proceedings under way, and nullified the very few court judgments made relating to security force violence. Anyone in prison for such offences would be released. As Stéphane Gacon has summarized, amnesties signal 'legal forgetting'.[131] In theory, since the amnesty only covered security force operations, some of the killings of Algerians undertaken by police described in Part I would not have come under the amnesty's remit: when judicial cases were closed, the reason invoked was most frequently the inability of investigators to identify individual police officers allegedly implicated. A first raft of judicial orders to close cases (*ordonnances de non-lieu*) intervened between 17 and 27 October 1962, and many others followed into late 1963.[132] In 1966, operations of Police judiciaire were also included in the amnesty.[133] Furthermore, the amnesty made it an offence to divulge the crimes committed that were amnestied.[134] Court proceedings, for example (typically when a former police or army officer pursues a left-wing journalist or researcher for libel), can only evoke the repression in general terms.

[125] Branche, *La Torture*, 416–21
[126] Rosoux, *Les Usages de la mémoire*, 105.
[127] See Stora, *La Gangrène*, 282–3.
[128] *JODP* (AN), 18 Dec. 1964, second session of 17 Dec. 1964, 6171.
[129] *JODP* (Senate), 4 Nov. 1964, session of 3 Nov. 1964, 1277.
[130] See Géronimi Report, 10–11, 28; Einaudi, *Octobre 1961*, 339–400.
[131] H. Rousso uses this term in relation to Vichy (*Le Syndrome de Vichy*, 66–71).
[132] See Einaudi, *Octobre 1961*, 339–46.
[133] Vidal-Naquet, *La Torture*, 126.
[134] Branche, *La Torture*, 418.

In the absence of trials for assassinations of Algerians, the reality of repression and the responsibilities (and identities) of perpetrators remained hidden. Thus both in the short and longer term, the amnesties were an essential part of the state cover-up, complemented over the following decades by refusal of access to public archives, thus attempting to impose silence. However, as Sandrine Lefranc has shown, amnesties may not always ensure the silence that their advocates seek to achieve.[135] For victim groups, amnesties, as a form of 'institutional forgetting',[136] may be experienced as one more injustice from a state whose agents, acting in its name, carried out the misdeed in the first place and then covered it up, a symbolic violence coming to reinforce the problems brought by state violence. Amnesties also remove from victims the possibility to forgive, since pardon is proclaimed in the name of the nation (or state), just as the amnesty often involves individuals or groups who do not believe they have done anything wrong, and will not recognize their acts.[137] The effects of amnesties are therefore social and political, as well as judicial: presented as the condition upon which French society can 'move on' in regained unity after 1962, since the 1990s amnesties have been opposed by memory activists as measures that prevent real unity since marginalizing the experiences of groups within post-colonial French society. The following chapters deal with how these colonial legacies evolved within a post-colonial context in which evocations of 17 October often remained politically and socially 'illegitimate' for the reasons traced in this and previous chapters.

[135] Lefranc, *Politiques du pardon*.

[136] Ricœur, *La Mémoire, l'histoire, l'oubli*, 586. However, some key army or police officers who played prominent roles in the repressive system analysed in Part I have received offical recognition (e.g. the Légion d'honneur award) since 1962 for their role during the war.

[137] Brigitte Jelen, '17 octobre 1961—17 octobre 2001: Une commémoration ambiguë', *French Politics, Culture and Society*, 20/1 (Spring 2002), 30–43.

10

'Underground' Memories, (1962–1979)

Just as genuine public disbelief hindered the attempts by some French witnesses of the violence during 17–20 October to garner more support to denounce the abuses, so many people in France reacted with relative incredulity when, in the 1980s and 1990s, the October events regained public visibility. They discovered the virtual public silence that had masked these events over two decades, from the early 1960s to 1980.[1] This chapter examines this period, following the few traces available to the historian, and argues that post-colonial power relations greatly limited the social and political 'space' for Algerians' memories of 17 October in France and Algeria. It analyses the content and contours of such resilient memories that often relate to the attitude Algerians held toward independent Algeria as well as France. With the Algerian state commemorating 17 October after 1968, and the far left in France reviving such memories (albeit for different reasons), there would be a very slow process of regaining of visibility in political debate. This allowed for limited memory transmission to subsequent generations of activists, who would seek to reverse the public oblivion into which 17 October risked being permanently lost.

ALGERIANS IN FRANCE: SILENCE BUT NOT FORGETTING

The virtual public silence in France regarding 17 October during the 1960 and 1970s was multilayered, and for some people composed of not knowing (for those not aware of 17 October), and for others of forgetting. For others still, who knew and remembered, silence was a strategy. Indeed, most Algerians in France seem to have retreated into a 'strategic silence' regarding the war in general, upon finding themselves in a memorial no-man's-land.[2] When Algerians evoked the memory of colonial violence, it was largely within family circles, although even in this context, verbalization and transmission proved problematic. How should we account for this? As Luisa Passerini suggests: 'it is constitutive of the definition of a silence

[1] Benjamin Stora uses the term 'underground' to describe the private, family-based memories of the Algerian War in France until the 1980s ('Guerre d'Algérie, France, la mémoire retrouvée', *Hommes et migrations*, 1158 (Oct. 1992), 10–14, 11).

[2] See Cohen, 'Silencing Objections'.

to find out its limits, its context, and its reference: in respect to whom and what is it as silence?'[3] The lack of written or oral sources hinders studying silence. However, by recourse to interviews, it has been possible to establish some of the reasons explaining why Algerians kept silent before the 1990s. Within this context, the comparison these informants made with other members of their family or group gives an insight into the social and hence memorial dynamics of the Algerian migrant communities. Interviews with memory activists helped to assess the reasons complicating memory transmission. Of course, these reasons will not be the same—or be configured in the same way—for each person or family. What emerged was the complex way that individual and social, personal and public memories are articulated, and the extent to which the political and social context, and the migratory dynamics, impacted on their expression. Very often, the wider problematic of the memories of Algerian migration forms the backdrop to understanding silences relating to 17 October and Algerians' wartime experiences more generally.

These links between silences over war memories and migrant memories can be drawn out via the work of sociologist Abdelmalek Sayad. Sayad stressed the need to understand the migrant experience as an individual (and collective) trajectory that started in Algeria, and to integrate the way in which such migration was 'generated' or caused to better understand how Algerians experienced their lives in France, and how Algerians related to Algeria.[4] Sayad's work helps us understand the arrival of many Algerians in Paris during 1954–62 having fled the continuing violence in Algeria. There, they had often experienced army exactions, forcible displacement, and hence internal migration.[5] Such displacement further weakened the social structures within Algerian society, and by definition the transmission of social memories, in a context of rapid social and economic change.[6] Those Algerians—in particular families—arriving in France had therefore often experienced terrible events in Algeria that may have limited the centrality of 17 October. For Algerians who had lost family members in Algeria during the war, or who had suffered violence or family deaths in France before 17 October, and who were not themselves injured on the demonstration, 17 October may not have ranked as the key event in the 'hierarchy of importance' of *their* wartime experiences.[7]

The memories Algerians have of the 17 October events are themselves diverse, and variously traumatic. Khaled Benaïssa remembers his initial impression as

[3] Luisa Passerini, 'Memories between Silence and Oblivion', in Hodgkin and Radstone, *Contested Pasts*, 249.

[4] See Abdelmalek Sayad, *L'Immigration ou les paradoxes de l'altérité* (Brussels: De Boeck Wesmael, 1991), and *La Double Absence: Des illusions de l'émigré aux souffrances de l'immigré* (Paris: Seuil, 1999). *La Double Absence* has been translated by David Macey: *The Suffering of the Immigrant* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2004). On Sayad, see Emmanuelle Saada, 'Abdelmalek Sayad and the Double Absence: Toward a Total Sociology of Migration', *French Politics, Culture and Society*, 18/1 (Spring 2000), 28–47.

[5] Hervo, *Chroniques*, 245–6. See also Bourdieu and Sayad, *Le Déracinement*.

[6] Pierre Bourdieu, *Algérie 60: Structures économiques et structures temporelles* (Paris: Minuit, 1977), written in 1963.

[7] Fentress and Wickham, *Social Memory*, 95.

a 12 year old of the preparations for the demonstration as being a 'big outing'. However, he was one of many demonstrators from the Nanterre shanty towns fired at by police on the Pont de Neuilly on 17 October. He underlines the different experiences Algerians endured on and after 17 October:

> For those that went on the protest and who managed to escape from the repression, it was a demonstration, they thought 'we've taken part in something'. For those who participated but who suffered physically, with clubbings and the like, I think a deep suffering has remained within them. Unfortunately, there are those that disappeared for ever and whose families don't even know what became of their bodies. In that case it's impossible to move beyond grieving.[8]

As Algerians came forward from the 1980s in particular to give testimony, few of those who did so had actually lost a close family member, suggesting that the greater the emotional pain endured, the less likely one was to speak out. For other families, a 'disappearance' must have left a problem of deep uncertainty, so that it would be doubly uncomfortable to speak out in whatever context, since the event remained unresolved and ambiguous. Unless they had witnessed violence themselves, it was not easy for Algerians in Paris during the late-war period more generally to know for sure whether the killing of a loved one, colleague, or friend resulted from police or FLN punitive action. Residents of the rue de la Garenne shanty town in Nanterre would not know who was responsible for the bodies they would discover lying in the alleyways as they went to work in the early morning, fostering the idea of a 'mysterious war'.[9] The clandestine nature of FLN activities—and the culture of secrecy the FLN fostered—contributed to this uncertainty, both at the time and after the war, just as the French security forces sought to benefit from such uncertainty.

Some of the FLN reports after the October demonstrations give an idea of the highly traumatic events Algerians experienced not just on the demonstrations, but in detention afterwards. Ahmed Amara*, arrested on 20 October at Saint-Michel, was taken to the Palais des Sports. After a brief evocation of his experiences there, he wrote that he had said enough, since 'I can't face up to remembering for fear of torturing my mind with mad thoughts of vengeance'. Another, Hocine Brahimi*, from the same address in the 13th arrondissement who had been taken to the Palais des Sports, wrote: 'what I saw cannot be described. It was unheard of suffering.'[10] Some Algerians may not have wanted to remember, and would therefore deliberately avoid speaking of this past.

What it meant to be a demonstrator on 17 October itself was not homogeneous either: while subsequent representations may insist on the repression in central Paris, many Algerians did not in fact get to central Paris on 17 October. Kamal*, who would later become one of the key carriers of this memory within the

[8] Interview (J.H.), Aubervilliers, 15 Oct. 2002.

[9] Interview (J.H.) with Mustapha*, a resident of a Nanterre *bidonville* in 1961 (Paris, 19 Feb. 2002). The asterisk denotes the use of a pseudonym.

[10] Both in APP-H1B35.

Algerian communities of suburban Saint-Denis, attempted to march from Vanves into Paris but was turned back at the Porte de Versailles by other Algerians telling him of the violence. He and his friends spent the evening in large cafés with hats on designed to make them 'look Italian'. By talking basic Italian, they successfully escaped arrest as Algerians, before sleeping in a public park. Similarly, many Algerians literally ran for their lives on 17 October, and/or spent the evening in cafés once they discovered the hostility of the police. As Kamal* summarizes: 'during the week of 17 October we were really afraid'.[11] Another demonstrator, Belkacem Smaïli recalls how, having escaped arrest near Étoile after coming in from suburban Colombes by taxi, he went into a café where, to dispel suspicion, he ordered a beer, knowing that French people would not expect an Algerian to do so. As he says: 'that beer saved me'. Stopped again by police while trying to head out of central Paris, he pretended to be Italian, and the police officer let him go.[12] Algerians knew how to play on the expectation of the French, and the stereotypes they held regarding the supposed physical appearance and behaviour of Algerians and Italians.

We also know that not all Algerians had wanted to attend the demonstrations, since they quite understandably feared what the police might do to them, or were worried about leaving family members (in particular very young children). In addition, the Algerian War in France, as we have seen, was also a civil war between Algerians (FLN, MNA, FPA), further suggesting the problematic nature of the war. Many Algerians remember the late-war period in Paris as one of fear, and 17 October itself as a moment of crisis, due to the severe physical, emotional, economic, and physical consequences the repression caused. However, some may recall 17 October more positively, as an example of self-affirmation in the public sphere and the seizing of political agency.[13] Some Algerian women may remember the demonstrations of 17–20 October as the realization of a spatial and political visibility to which they seldom had access.[14] Perhaps for many Algerians, their memories of the demonstration and of its political significance, the pride they felt demonstrating, sit alongside the pain of the repression.

The direct, experiential memories of 17 October were also multi-generational. For those Algerians who went on the demonstration as children, the full significance of the event might only come later, either via evocation within the family or from coming into contact with memory carriers and the reinterpretation of the events in the light of a new context. Interviewed in Yamina Benguigui's film *Mémoires d'immigrés* (Immigrants' Memories) the singer Mounsi, a child during the Algerian War living in the La Folie *bidonville* in Nanterre, described his experiences in the following way: 'I was too young to understand, but I know that for

[11] Interview (J.H.), Paris, 14 Oct. 2002. Kamal* had been in France since 1948.

[12] Interview (J.H.), Sarcelles, 13 Apr. 2005. Belkacem Smaïli was arrested on 25 Oct. 1961 and, after having suffered violence at the CIV, was deported to Algeria, where he spent the rest of the war in detention.

[13] Many of the FLN reports in APP-H1B35 express this opinion.

[14] See Anne Tristan, *Le Monde* (20–1 Oct. 1991). See also Ali Akika's documentary film *Les Enfants d'octobre* (2000).

days and nights I heard mothers crying, and saw others tear their hair out . . . It was much later on that I found out what had happened during this awful day . . . '[15] Although he had been on the 20 October 1961 women's demonstration as a 10-year-old boy, Farid Aïchoune's parents had not spoken about their wartime experiences. Consequently, during the 1960s he had forgotten the general context in which the October demonstrations had occurred: 'as an adolescent, I had taken on the collective memory of the French, *i.e.* Charonne, that's to say I had obscured my own history'.[16]

THE CULTURAL AND SOCIAL DYNAMICS OF MIGRANT MEMORIES AND THE ALGERIAN WAR

Analysts of social memory underline the need for group and spatial stability to ensure the construction of social frameworks of memory and hence facilitate the perpetuation of memory.[17] In the case of post-1962 Algerian migration history, this would prove difficult. Upon independence, some Algerian migrants, and many FLN *cadres*, returned to Algeria. They arrived among Algerians who had not experienced the war in France and in a context of considerable official hostility to the legacy of the FF-FLN. Given the relatively favourable conditions for migration under the provisions of the Évian agreements, and the continuing economic problems of post-independence Algeria, the number of Algerian migrants to France increased. There was thus considerable 'renewal' of Algerian migrants in France. As a result, large numbers of Algerians in France in, for example, 1965, had not been there during the war. These migratory dynamics can only have 'diluted' group cohesion and the memories of the war in France. After 1968, when the Amicale started to promote and commemorate 17 October, it addressed an Algerian community many of whose wartime memories were linked not to France but to Algeria. Those Algerians who had been in Paris in 1961 but who returned to Algeria often arrived back in France a few years later disillusioned by independent Algeria.

Many further factors proper to the situation of emigration have affected the relationship that Algerians maintain between past, present, and future, impacting on decisions to remain silent about 17 October. Sayad developed a model of migration progressing through three stages (*âges*), the first of which until the late 1940s saw Algerian migrants departing on a temporary basis to France, their emigration subordinated to the local Algerian economy. Hereafter, economic hardship in Algeria became increasingly widespread, with local economies further subordinated to immigration: the migrants of this second stage, who correspond

[15] Yamina Benguigui, *Mémoires d'immigrés* (Paris: Canal Plus Éditions, 1997), 154 (the book version of the film *Mémoires d'immigrés: L'Héritage maghrébin*). On the retrospective widening of personal memory, see Halbwachs, *La Mémoire collective*, 118–19.

[16] Interview (J.H.), Paris, 7 June 2002.

[17] Halbwachs, *La Mémoire collective*, 58–9.

approximately to the profile of post-1945 migrants in France during the Algerian War and immediately after, were less attached to their communities, and interacted more with French society.[18] Sayad identified the important notional predispositions leading migrants to consider life in France as temporary, governed by various 'narratives of return' and analysed the variously ambivalent attitudes Algerians held towards France and Algeria, and the ambivalence with which family and community in Algeria in turn viewed their absent members.[19] The Algerian and French states, for different reasons, also participated in the 'collective illusions' regarding the 'myth of return'—the French state seeing the 'immigrants' as due eventually to return home, as did the Algerian state with its 'emigrants'.[20] For Sayad, what ensued was a 'double absence': the migrant, spatially absent from Algeria, remained present within the minds of those left behind in Algeria. Yet his/her spatial presence in France was marked both by a partial absence from the habitus of their communities[21] and only a partial belonging to French societal values, representing a 'diminished presence'.[22]

Until the early to mid-1970s, many Algerian male migrants entertained this 'myth of return', constantly putting off their departure back to Algeria, resulting in a long-lasting provisional status and disposition, their stays in France becoming ever longer. How could such Algerians, having supported Algerian independence, verbalize a decision to stay in the country of the former colonizer, and in a socio-economic context that often denied them a decent existence, and where racism remained a real issue? What did their wartime experiences in France signify if these migrants did not then go back to Algeria? How could Algerians admit to their children that the independent Algeria for which they had fought did not correspond to their hopes? By the time they did return (or on every, increasingly irregular visit), they did not find what they expected to find in their native Algerian villages. Many Algerian migrants and their children were not well received by officials when they arrived back in Algeria. For the Algerian state therefore, Algerians in France were in some respect 'illegitimate' nationals (emigrants), just as, for the French state, what Algerians might say about their wartime experiences was also 'illegitimate'.[23] Uncertain about their futures, and occupying an often precarious social, political, and cultural status, Algerian migrants had little incentive to speak about the wartime past in France. The situation of emigration also led some parents to grow apart from their children, and Algerian fathers would in any case often retain an emotional distance from children. Socialized in France, the latter would become, in the eyes of some parents, 'illegitimate children' via their infringement of the norms

[18] Sayad, *La Double Absence*, ch. 1 ('La faute originelle et le mensonge collectif', 23–51) and 2 ('Les trois âges de l'émigration', 53–98).

[19] The term, used in the singular, is from Anne-Marie Fortier, *Migrant Belongings: Memory, Space, Identity* (Oxford: Berg, 2000), 18.

[20] Sayad, *La Double Absence* (chapter 'Une immigration exemplaire', 101–32), 115, and 114–17.

[21] Ibid. 115. [22] Saada, 'The Organic Ethnologist', 37.

[23] Sayad, *La Double Absence*, ch. 5 ('Le choc en retour sur la société d'origine', 163–72).

of Algerian cultural codes: this often further hindered communication between parents and children.[24]

In any case, the status of the migrant was pregnant with a certain number of silences over the hardships endured, whether these involved colonial violence or not. Migrants often sought to paint a 'rosy' picture of life in France when they went back to Algeria, whether permanently or for visits home, and often hid the nature and extent of the many hardships of exile (*al-ghorba*).[25] The social impossibility of admitting failure, and the almost stoic reluctance to verbalize a painful experience, constitute key factors. Returning migrants also perhaps felt the need to 'protect' the future emigrants from the necessary 'disappointment' that arrival in France would represent, although many prospective migrants were probably already aware of what lay ahead. Migrants often found solace for the trials of emigration by listening to the songs of Sliman Azem and Cheikh El Hasnaoui that evoked the migrant experience.[26]

For cultural reasons, Algerians were unlikely to recount extremely traumatic events that may have led to the loss or injury of a loved one, or personal injury. If all the community had suffered, was it not selfish to draw attention to one's own sufferings or to those of one's family? In militating for Algerian independence and by participating in the demonstration, had Algerians not simply 'done their duty'? Farid Aïchoune argues that Kabyle cultural codes forbid dwelling on the past, hence the expression 'the past is dead' (*li fat met*).[27] Some of the interviewees for this book, who had become known precisely because of their public role in the promotion of the memories of 17 October from the 1980s onwards, had not volunteered their wartime memories to their own children before then. Autobiographical writing by and interviews with descendants of Algerian migrants often allude to their parents' previous (or continuing) silence about the war.[28] The researcher Jean-Luc Einaudi, speaking of his oral history work with Algerians since the 1980s, described how, when Algerians agreed to speak him about 17 October, it was often in front of their children who then heard about their parents' stories for the first time.[29]

Silence could also intervene to help the wider migrant project in the future, that is, the well-being of subsequent generations. There is evidence to suggest that many parents deliberately did not transmit their wartime experiences (here, in particular, those of 17 October), since such memories were so terrible that parents feared their children, on learning of them, would become alienated from French society. In particular, after they took the decision to remain in France—a decision usually taken in the 1970s and representing the third stage in Sayad's model—parents

[24] See Sayad, *L'Immigration ou les paradoxes*, ch. 7 ('Les enfants illégitimes', 185–258).

[25] Sayad, *La Double Absence*, 35–6, 214.

[26] See Rachid Mokhtari, *La Chanson de l'exil: Les Voix natales (1939–1969)* (Algiers: Casbah Éditions, 2001).

[27] Interview (J.H.). Paris, 7 June 2002.

[28] e.g. Aïcha Benaissa and Sophie Poncelet, *Née en France* (Paris: Payot, 1990), 18, on attitudes to the war in Benaissa's family: 'I've tried speaking about it. It's a taboo subject. We don't talk about it, ever.'

[29] Interview (J.H.), Paris, 22 Oct. 2002.

recognized very well the need (however psychologically painful such recognition might prove) for their children to integrate and, they hoped, enjoy social mobility that colonialism had prevented the older generations from achieving. The sociologist Saïd Bouamama, who has analysed family dynamics within the Algerian migrant communities, argues that 'it wasn't to obscure the past but to go beyond it . . . that parents kept quiet' in relation to painful wartime experiences, including 17 October.[30]

Many Algerians also subscribed to the need to 'move on' after the war. The sacrifices consented to during the war had succeeded: independence had been won, not 'given'. Many Algerians stressed that the war had not been about fighting the French but about fighting colonialism. Now that colonialism was over, Algerians should not dwell on this painful past but concentrate on improving their social conditions.[31] In some respects, these narratives of 'moving on' reflect the portrait of French society in the 1960s seeking to accede to and enjoy consumer society, although, for Algerians, its benefits were usually less tangible than those of indigenous French workers, and came with greater personal sacrifices. Conversely, some of the children (and now grandchildren) of Algerian migrants, precisely because they wanted to understand their family's trajectories and relatives' life histories, would become more interested in the historical and cultural heritage of their parents (cf. Chapters 11 and 12). The situation of emigration therefore carries with it certain aspects that hinder the solidification and transmission of social memories. The result of social and economic change in Algeria, emigration engenders further (indeed accelerated) cultural change for migrants in France.

In addition, there are also important spatial dynamics that may have weakened memories of migration and of colonial violence. Rehousing away from *bidonvilles*, temporary prefabricated housing (*cités de transit*), and inner city districts has led to the (often literal) erasure of sites on which memories could focus, later reinforced by the closure of factories where migrants worked. David Lepoutre and Isabelle Cannoodt talk of the 'permanent destruction' affecting the residential spaces of many migrants.[32] Over the course of the 1960s and 1970s, the authorities slowly dismantled the *bidonvilles*, disrupting communal solidarities.[33] Indeed, that was arguably one of the very reasons why the shanty towns were dismantled. The French authorities viewed the move to 'temporary' social housing (*cités de transit*) as a necessary 'stage' in a process of cultural integration, as part of a deliberate social policy to disrupt and shape cultural behavioural patterns within the 'private sphere'. The eventual 'prize' for Algerians was the promised accession to public housing, one that often took many years to realize. North African family units were broken down into those of the 'nuclear family'.[34] Subsequently, some

[30] Interview (J.H.), Lille, 6 Apr. 2001.

[31] Interview (J.H.) with Saad Abssi, Gennevilliers, 18 Apr. 2003. Saad Abssi had been a senior FLN cadre in Paris and Lyon during the war, and worked for the Amicale until 1965.

[32] Lepoutre and Cannoodt, *Souvenirs de familles immigrées*, 66.

[33] See Hervo and Charras, *Bidonvilles*.

[34] See Mehdi Lallaoui, *Du bidonville aux HLM* (Paris: Syros, 1993).

Algerians expressed 'nostalgia' for the sociability of the *bidonville* that had allowed for greater group solidarities.[35] For the single male workers, the *foyers* provided not so much a means of continuing group solidarity but a striking spatial representation of the individualization promoted by the authorities.[36] Those areas of central Paris such as the Goutte d'Or with their cafés, have nevertheless continued to be areas invested with important symbolism as places of Algerian sociability, although elsewhere the geography of Algerian migration in central Paris has changed considerably since the 1960s.

The post-war period saw remarkable continuity regarding the French state's attempts to socially and politically control and dominate the Algerian community in France. Any 'break' between the colonial and post-colonial periods appears difficult to observe before the early 1970s, well beyond the initial four-year transitory period (1962–6) envisaged by the Évian agreements.[37] The Paris police defined itself in competition with the Algerian state (via the Amicale) regarding the political and social control of Algerian migrants. For the French state, after 1966, the threat of the far left—and the perceived threat of PCF influence—on Algerian migrants grew stronger. Means of surveillance elaborated during the war therefore continued, obeying a different political strategy. The Service d'assistance technique (SAT), for example, continued its functions well into the 1970s (a surveillance function hidden behind social and administrative provision), thus limiting the post-war demilitarization of policing. Maurice Papon, who remained as Prefect until 1967, intervened in May 1962 to ensure the continuation of the SAT.[38] Papon argued that the absence of specialist police units for Algerians between 1945 and 1958 was 'definitely behind the very serious difficulties we have experienced for four years'.[39] Interior Ministry personnel continued to compile and exploit information on Algerians' spatial distribution and political affiliation, putting in place a heavy-handed multi-agency approach to the eventual dismantling of the *bidonvilles*.[40] Many North Africans were therefore being 'administered' by the same (former) colonial staff as during the war, joined by a further 'wave' of colonial personnel after Algerian independence.

Given this situation, Algerians' fears about speaking out about their wartime experiences in France—even if they had wanted to—appear understandable, and

[35] Sayad and Dupuy, *Un Nanterre algérien*, 111–15.

[36] Marc Bernardot, 'Une politique de logement: La SONACOTRA (1956–1992)', Ph.D. dissertation (Paris: Université de Paris-I-Panthéon-Sorbonne, 1997).

[37] See Jim House, 'Contrôle, encadrement, surveillance et répression des migrations coloniales: Une décolonisation difficile (1956–1970)', *Bulletin de l'Institut d'histoire du temps présent*, 83 (1er semestre 2004), 144–56. See also Viet, *La France immigrée*, 217–30.

[38] Papon's career then took him to state-run Sud-Aviation in 1967. A Gaullist deputy for much of the subsequent period, he became treasurer of the Gaullist Union des démocrates pour la République in 1971, before his appointment as President of the Finance Commission of the Assemblée nationale in 1972. In 1978, he became Budget Minister in Raymond Barre's government. See Violet, *Le Dossier Papon*, 184–93.

[39] APP-HA60, dossier 'SAT-FMA Généralités (1958–1962)', letter (7 May 1962) to Office of Minister of Interior and Minister of State for Algerian Affairs, *Au sujet du rôle du SAT-FMA*.

[40] See Hervo and Charras, *Bidonvilles*, 357–86.

constitute a further reason for their silence regarding state violence. Even today, many victims of colonial violence only speak out under cover of anonymity. Their silence is not forgetting: some carry a 'bodily memory' of the violence (the physical and psychological pain of injuries received) that still affects them every day.[41] Many Algerians in France tried not to draw the attention of police onto themselves. Speaking out, as they perceived it, would have opened themselves up to the potentially disastrous financial consequences that possible deportation could bring.

But what if Algerians had wanted to speak out? Algerians could have had little confidence in the French judicial system and all judicial investigations relating to alleged police brutalities against Algerians ended by 1964. Who would have believed Algerians' testimonies? Some had spoken out previously, to no avail: there was 'absence of opportunities for voice'.[42] As Annette Wieviorka has shown, the context in which testimonies can be 'heard' and listened to is crucial.[43] When no groups within society are willing to take on board certain experiences, individuals often retreat into silence. There was, officially, no massacre on 17 October, nor had there been any state terror: the dominant narratives remained in place in France. On the other hand, far from there being silence on the war in France during this period, various groups, such as the *pieds-noirs*, feeling aggrieved at the state's actions, formed highly structured, cohesive identities using anti-Gaullist themes. Similarly, the *Algérie française* lobby within a renascent far right, the *harkis* in the 1970s, and other former military personnel mobilized their respective memories of the war, producing a highly charged politics of memory from which most Algerian economic migrants were absent.[44]

In France, there were no associations seeking to collect testimony regarding 17 October. With the relative absence of social stimuli and 'legitimacy' via associations, media, school, and little academic interest in migration history during the 1960s,[45] a 'vicious circle' existed whereby the public silence within French society relating to state violence reinforced the marginalization of Algerians' wartime experiences.[46] In addition, some Algerians might not feel comfortable expressing themselves in French. Monique Hervo describes these experiences as 'suffering that could not be communicated',[47] and compounding those of exile. Publicly and, in some cases, privately, there was not a 'context for the transmission of memory'.[48] For former demonstrator Khaled Benaïssa to give testimony: 'two conditions need

[41] Interview (J.H.) with Mustapha* (Paris, 19 Feb. 2002), a Moroccan resident of a Nanterre shanty town in 1961, who still suffers back pain from brutalization during security force raids there. The term 'bodily memory' comes from Ross, *May '68*, 34.

[42] See Cohen, 'Silencing Objections', 200–3.

[43] Annette Wieviorka, *L'Ère du témoin* (Paris: Hachette, 2002; 1st publ. 1998).

[44] See Stora, *La Gangrène*.

[45] See Noiriel, *Le Creuset français*, ch. 1, 'Non-lieu de mémoire'.

[46] The one exception is Claire Etcherelli's novel, *Élise ou la vraie vie* (Paris: Denoël, 1967) that recreates the atmosphere of Paris during the Algerian War, and which achieved wide public attention when published.

[47] Hervo, *Chroniques*, 249.

[48] Fentress and Wickham, *Social Memory*, 122.

to be met. On the one hand, society has to accept the situation and on the other, those that have experienced these difficulties themselves need to be ready and backed by associations.' He did not speak publicly of his experiences until the 1990s: his 'double trauma' of violence in Algeria and then on 17 October meant that, for him, the episode 'needed to be shut out, and not spoken about again, because it was too painful'.[49] As Michael Pollak concluded in his study of Holocaust memory: 'remaining silent about the past stems less perhaps from forgetting than from a way of dealing with memory according to the conditions for communicating it at a given moment of one's life'.[50] For many Algerians, this resulted in what Mehdi Lallaoui calls the 'imprisonment of this voice, of this memory', a memory that was not forgotten but 'put to one side'.[51]

However, some former militants did transmit the oral memory of the demonstrations to their children. Samia Messaoudi, who was 6 years old in 1961, learnt about the demonstration from her father, an FLN militant: 'Throughout my time as adolescent he would constantly remind us of this history and the memory of the struggle he had been engaged in.'[52] The most politicized among Algerians probably had more motivation to keep alive the memory, a commonly observed phenomenon in migration.[53] As we shall see in the next section, the Amicale must also have played its part in keeping alive the memory of 17 October to some, albeit limited sections of the Algerians communities in France. Nevertheless, the silence, and absence of familial transmission of this memory, appears to have been more prevalent, the consequences of which became apparent in the 1970s.

OFFICIAL ALGERIAN COMMEMORATIONS, 1965–1979

There was not total silence regarding 17 October 1961 during this period. Ben Bella's grasp on power loosened by 1965, and in June of that year, the army, under Houari Boumediene, seized control in a bloodless coup, marking the triumph of the military. After consolidating his position, Boumediene, who remained in power until his death in December 1978, turned to social and economic reform.[54] It was within this framework that he assigned Algerian migration in France greater importance. While the first celebrations of the National Emigration Day (*Journée nationale à l'émigration*) took place in October 1968, they originated in the National Seminar on Emigration held in August 1966. This seminar addressed, in Boumediene's own words, the situation of 'these brothers who are in fact only

[49] Interview (J.H.), Aubervilliers, 15 Oct. 2002.

[50] Michael Pollak, 'La Gestion de l'indicible', *Actes de la recherche en sciences sociales*, 62–3 (1986), 30–53, 51.

[51] Interview (J.H.), Marseille, 27 Feb. 2002. With Samia Messaoudi, Mehdi Lallaoui co-founded the association Au nom de la mémoire (see Chs. 11 and 12).

[52] Interview (J.H.), Paris, 12 June 2002.

[53] Luis Felipe Baêta Neves Flores, 'Mémoires migrantes: Migration et idéologie de la mémoire sociale', *Ethnologie française*, 25/1 (1995), 43–50.

[54] Ruedy, *Modern Algeria*, 207–11.

provisionally emigrants'. Boumediene's economic policy envisaged developing a strong industrial sector in Algeria that could attract Algerian workers to return from France, as return and reintegration (*réinsertion*) became official policy.[55] In fact, given the relative failure of the policies of economic development pursued during this period, reliance on emigration and the financial advantages this brought would remain.

For Benjamin Stora, Boumediene set about restoring the role of the Algerian military during the War of Independence. The Algerian 'Revolution' (*al-thawra*) was written in a triumphalistic, simplistic way, passing over the historical origins, internal disputes, and plurality of actors of the war.[56] The aim was to 'assure(d) public respect for the military'.[57] What was written, how it was written, and by whom it was written were all tightly controlled. As Hassan Remaoun has summarized, the aim was a rewriting of history (*réécriture*) in order to rectify colonialist versions of the past and affirm the 'true' national (pre-colonial) identity of Algeria (presented as Islamic and Arab), and to write history (*écriture*) to celebrate the centrality of the Revolution to provide legitimacy to the state to which the FLN was subordinated. The official media and school programmes reflected such developments.[58] These selective narratives of the past were part of a wider process of stifling political pluralism. The role of the Amicale—the Algerian state's relay association in France—was to promote and impose such instrumentalized representations within the migrant communities. This mobilization of 17 October to reinforce political priorities in Algeria centred on the celebration of the unitary state. For the FLN, Algerians during 1954–62 constituted the heroic people united in anti-colonialist struggle and the 'martyrs' this had produced. The Amicale's role was all the more crucial for the FLN in that France was being used as a base by radical leftist and Berber elements to oppose the Algiers regime.[59]

Amicale leaders in 1967 requested the 'repatriation' of the bodies of Algerian wartime 'martyrs' in France, as Boumediene celebrated the cult of the wartime dead.[60] More generally, diplomatic tensions throughout this period dictated a more assertive anti-colonialist tone to FLN evocations of the War of Independence.[61] On the first National Emigration Day (17 October 1968),[62] an Air Algérie plane arrived in Algiers carrying the remains of 53 former FLN militants who had died in Belgium and northern France during the Algerian War. On 19 June 1969,

[55] *L'Émigration algérienne: Problèmes et perspectives* (Séminaire national sur l'émigration. Palais des Nations, Algiers, 8–15 August 1966) (Paris: Direction centrale de l'Amicale des Algériens en Europe, 1966), 10.

[56] *La Gangrène*, 228–9.

[57] Martin Stone, *The Agony of Algeria* (London: Hurst & Co., 1997), 54–5.

[58] Hassan Remaoun, 'L'Intervention institutionnelle et son impact sur la pratique historiographique en Algérie: La Politique "d'Écriture et de Réécriture de l'histoire", tendances et contre-tendances', *Insâniyât*, 19–20 (Jan.–June 2003), 7–40, 7–8.

[59] See Karima Dirèche-Slimani, *Histoire de l'émigration kabyle en France au XXe siècle* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 1997), 92–121.

[60] Manceron and Remaoun, *D'une rive à l'autre*, 58.

[61] Rosoux, *Les Usages de la mémoire*, 110–12.

[62] See *L'Algérien en Europe*, 67 (1 Nov. 1968), 10–11. The 1968 commemorations had very little media impact in France.

another 116 bodies were brought to Algiers, again for official burial in the 'martyrs' section of the El-Alia cemetery overlooking Algiers. The third and largest convoy arrived on 20 March 1970, with 375 bodies arriving by boat, where they received an official welcome.[63] The 1970 operation concerned, amongst other people, nineteen Algerians sentenced to death by French authorities. Within the contingent of repatriated bodies, it is possible to identify at least fourteen Algerians killed during September–October 1961 in the Paris region, probably at the hands of the police, with three of these deaths directly linked to 17–18 October 1961. The date of 17 October symbolized the wider struggle of Algerians in France for their independence. Nonetheless, some of the victims of state terror finally did get their 'recognition' and their individual tombstone, and there is great symbolic importance to such 'repatriation'. Yet, by 'reclaiming' these bodies, the Algerian state was making a clear statement about the political and religious attachment of the dead to the Algerian nation. The FLN was playing on the national (Algerian) and the trans-national (the *Umma*) or, more precisely, the very inseparability of the two since Boumediene considered Islam as profoundly constitutive of 'authentic' Algerianness (*algérianité*), and Algerians needed a burial in a majority Muslim country. As Abdelmalek Sayad has shown, the 'return' of the deceased migrant's body is a way of reconciling the group with one of 'its' individuals who had 'gone astray' by emigrating—even if the individual in this case died in the cause of the nation.[64] Naming the dead as *chuhâdâ* (singular *chahîd*(*a*)) or martyrs was directly linked to the idea of a holy war.[65] As the Amicale publication put it in October 1969: 'the Emigration Day that is now celebrated annually like the other national holidays signifies Algeria's total attachment to its children temporarily living away, and the emigrants' even stronger attachment to the mother country.'[66]

From the late 1960s onwards, well-established commemorative events took place every 17 October, this date sitting alongside 5 July (Independence) and 1 November (start of Revolution) and (to a lesser extent) 8 May (Sétif, 1945) and 10–11 December 1960. Indeed, this was in marked contrast, as we have seen, to the way in which the 17 October demonstrations had initially been written out of the key Algerian nationalist dates. In October 1976, the Amicale publication stated that, by demonstrating on 17 October 1961, Algerians had relayed 'their brothers in the Casbah, Belcourt and Clos Salembier' who had demonstrated in Algiers in December 1960, and that the 17 October protests had helped 'speed up the process already underway towards Algerian independence'.[67] The urban actors of the war were regaining their place in official Algerian representations after their occultation under Ben Bella.

[63] *L'Algérien en Europe*, 99 (26 Mar.–9 Apr. 1970), 22–5.
[64] Abdelmalek Sayad, 'Préface', in Yassine Chaïb, *L'Émigré et la mort: La Mort musulmane en France* (Édisud: Aix-en-Provence, 2000), 12–13.
[65] Ibid. 204.
[66] *L'Algérien en Europe*, 89 (16 Oct. 1969), 18, 19.
[67] *L'Algérien en Europe*, 242 (17 Oct. 1976), 4–5.

Every year, Amicale officials would participate in commemorative ceremonies at the Muslim cemetery in suburban Bobigny, and the Muslim sector of the Thiais cemetery in the southern Paris suburbs, where a mass grave contains the unmarked remains of some Algerians who died in September–October 1961. Meetings took place throughout the main cities of the Algerian diaspora in France, with former demonstrators describing their experiences. Sometimes French organizations (CGT, CIMADE) attended these ceremonies.[68] In Algeria, meetings and ceremonies would take place organized by the Ministère des Anciens Moudjahidîn (Ministry for War Veterans). The Amicale's publication often devoted lengthy dossiers to the 17 October demonstrations, including some testimony from participants—but seldom (before the 1980s) of any of the key players in the organization of the demonstration.[69] As Joshua Cole has argued, partial rehabilitation of the role of Algerian migration during the war did not mean the rehabilitation of its former leaders, and even under Boumediene, there was no forum for the former FF-FLN activists who had returned to Algeria, since the Fédération de France was not recognized as a true military region (*wilaya*).[70] Official commemoration therefore hid other political tensions.

The tenth anniversary of 17 October in 1971 was held under the shadow of disagreements between France and Algeria subsequent to Boumediene's nationalization of the hydrocarbons industry as an attempt to escape from the neo-colonial situation in which Algeria found itself.[71] Levels of hostility against Algerians in France had increased as a result, and became a second reason, according to the FLN, for Algerians to return to Algeria.[72] At a public meeting in Paris on 17 October 1971, 3,000 Algerians heard a senior FLN cadre from Algeria denounce the racism Algerians were suffering, and criticize France for not improving the social conditions of Algerians in France.[73] In Algeria, roads or squares were renamed '17 October' in many cities, including Constantine and Tlemcen, and Jacques Panijel's film *Octobre à Paris* was screened at this point. Memorial ceremonies took place throughout the country.[74] There was therefore an attempt by the Algerian state to spread or 'nationalize' its official memory of 17 October in Algeria and within the Algerian diaspora. In subsequent years, the link made between the racism of the Algerian War and racism in 1973 and 1976, coupled with the view that migration was caused by (neo)colonialism, showed the extent of the post-colonial legacies informing Amicale priorities and representations.[75]

[68] See *L'Humanité*'s support for the Amicale commemorative events in its edn. of 17 Oct. 1974.

[69] e.g. *L'Algérien en Europe*, 111 (13–29 Oct. 1970), 5–15; 134 (11–26 Oct. 1971), 4–17; 156 (1–15 Oct. 1972), 5–10; 157 (1–15 Nov. 1972). See also *Le Monde* (18 Oct. 1972), which stays largely faithful to the official French version.

[70] Cole, 'Remembering the Battle of Paris', 31–2.

[71] See Rosoux, *Les Usages de la mémoire*, 105–8.

[72] See *L'Algérien en Europe*, 127 (14–28 June 1971), 32–3.

[73] Speech by Kaïd Ahmed, in *L'Algérien en Europe*, 135 (27 Oct.–9 Nov. 1971), 20–1.

[74] Ibid. 21–3.

[75] See *L'Algérien en Europe*, 178 (1–15 Nov. 1973), 25–7; 229 (29 Feb. 1976).

17 October 1961 was therefore a subject of some interest to the FLN at this point. Why did so few Algerians identify with who was doing the commemorating and what was being said? The main problem was arguably the gulf separating the Algerian state from its people. The Amicale used this memory to underline the obedience of Algerians to the FLN, and was thus not really engaging with the concerns of many former demonstrators. Looking at official PCF memory, Marie-Claire Lavabre has observed how the PCF attempts to 'homogenize' representations of its past:[76] similar observations apply to the Amicale. Crucially, the FLN was not interested in promoting the memory of 17 October within French society more generally, since this official memory fulfilled a specific political function within Algerian migration, and a diplomatic function regarding France. Boumediene called for migrants to return from France, unilaterally halting new Algerian migration in 1973.[77] Yet, many Algerian migrants, despite the hardships of emigration, and the increasingly aggressive application of stricter immigration policy by the French authorities, were deciding they were probably better off in France than in Algeria. While the October 1961 demonstrations were celebrated as an important stage in the acquisition of independence, by the 1970s, many Algerians were disillusioned with the lack of social, economic, and political improvements they had hoped for, rendering their wartime struggles less meaningful. For example, the Amicale celebrated the contribution of Algerian women in France to the struggle for independence, highlighting the women's demonstrations of 20 October and 9 November 1961.[78] However, considerable evidence shows that many Algerian women felt marginalized from official war memories and that their social status (with the exception of education) had not significantly improved.[79] The official commemorative process was therefore incapable of creating a real political identification with the post-war FLN amongst many Algerians in France, as the Algiers regime sought to displace the meanings Algerians drew from 17 October.

A CONVERGENCE OF MILITANT TRAJECTORIES, 1962–1979

What were the traces of 17 October within French society outside of the Algerian migrant communities and the Amicale? Some French former supporters of the FLN and other anti-colonial activists became important memory carriers of the war and of 17 October, and these groups represent another key factor in the memorial afterlives of 17 October. In Pierre Vidal-Naquet's words, there was, regarding 17 October, 'a very thin strand of loyalty to this event'[80] during the 1960s and 1970s, activist memories that would be reactivated, both individually

[76] Lavabre, *Le Fil rouge*, 281.
[77] MacMaster, *Colonial Migrants*, 205.
[78] See *L'Algérien en Europe*, 111 (13–29 Oct. 1970), 14–15; 134 (11–26 Oct. 1971), 8–9.
[79] Djamila Amrane, *Les Femmes algériennes dans la guerre* (Paris: Plon, 1992).
[80] Interviewed in *Libération* (12–13 Oct. 1991), 27.

and collectively, in more receptive subsequent political and social circumstances. As we saw for Algerian migrants, the period 1962–79 was far from monolithic, and similarly for the political and social worlds in which radical left activists moved. Several key processes and dates mark this period, leading for some to an engagement or re-engagement with Algerians in France.

In the immediate post-war period, while some identified sufficiently with Ben Bella's regime to go and work there,[81] all former FLN supporters found the marginalization of the FF-FLN confusing. Many of the more prominent members of the support networks were still in jail or exiled.[82] Campaigns for wider amnesties certainly ensured some continuing unity of purpose after the war, however after the mid-1960s there was considerable fragmentation of the support groups as activists returned, when they could, to families and careers. The majority of those *porteurs de valises* who helped organize the 17 October 1961 demonstrations have stayed out of public view to this day. Why is this? While academic and media attention has cast light on the Jeanson and Curiel networks, the *soutiens* for 17 October 1961 were not in an integrated support network with prominent figures.[83] After the war, many activists feared hostile responses to such revelations. Many *porteurs de valises* have a selfless desire not to bring attention to their wartime contribution. Furthermore, many (if not a slight majority) were women (*porteuses de valises*): consequently, there may not have been social recognition of the role these women played. There was no demand to solicit their testimonies before the late 1970s.[84] When asked in interview, all former FLN supporters (*soutiens*) and anti-colonial sympathizers had difficulty evoking specific instances of 17 October being a frequent topic of discussion during the 1960s and 1970s.[85]

In addition, as the mid-1960s approached, the political and social directions that independent Algeria took were not welcomed by many former anti-colonial activists who had hoped for a truly democratic regime or/and an example of revolution in action.[86] However, this disappointment did not mean re-evaluating their decision to implicate themselves in clandestine action in favour of independence. *Porteurs de valises*, and other anti-colonial activists who denounced repression during the war, generally considered that after 1962 they did not have a role in internal Algerian affairs.[87] What arguably remained, and would still play an important role in the 1990s, is a specific sensibility, a disposition and capacity to pinpoint and denounce state abuses, (post-)colonial violence, and its covering up, due to knowledge and, in some cases, experience of such tactics during the war. Again, these activists did not

[81] See Pattieu, *Les Camarades des frères*, ch. 10, 'Pieds-rouges'.
[82] See Ulloa, *Francis Jeanson*, 235–8.
[83] See MacMaster and House, 'La Fédération de France'.
[84] See Hamon and Rotman, *Les Porteurs de valises*.
[85] See *Esprit*, 417 (Oct. 1972), 'Retour sur la guerre d'Algérie', 387–412, esp. 398–9.
[86] See Vidal-Naquet, *Mémoires*, ii. 187–9.
[87] See Francis Jeanson in Charby, *Les Porteurs d'espoir*, 40. See also Evans, *Memory of Resistance*, 17–19.

forget 17 October, but there were very few public evocations of this event to stimulate memory.

The way in which the events of May '68 did or did not play a role in the transmission of the memories of 17 October and opposition to the war more generally remains understudied. Kristin Ross and Nicole de Maupeou Abboud have shown that the 'prehistory' of May '68 goes back to the 'generation' of student, anti-fascist and/or anti-war radicals that constituted the 'Algerian generation'.[88] By following the respective political trajectories of these militants, one can see, with hindsight, that they acted as memory carriers within the particular movements in which they were involved. For the older activists, their post-62 political priorities may have shifted to Vietnam and Cuba, but since the Algerian War constituted the key element of their political socialization, the memory of that period was likely to have remained in their minds.[89]

It appears unlikely that during the events of May '68 there was any wide transmission of memory of 17 October to those who had been too young in 1961–2 to comprehend, or to those who had since forgotten the anti-Algerian violence in Paris. However, there were a few examples of direct links to 17 October: the term *ratonnade*, and the verb *ratonner* (meaning 'to undertake such attacks'), had entered the vocabulary of student protestors. Clandestine screenings of *Octobre à Paris* and Gillo Pontecorvo's *La Bataille d'Alger* took place at the Studio Luxembourg.[90] Journalists who had covered both October 1961 and May '68 made some links.[91] Yet many slogans, graffiti, and posters in May '68 mentioned Charonne, not 17 October.[92] One flyer, denouncing the police violence of 10–11 May 1968, states: 'Us demonstrators are the guinea-pigs for the experiments of a sadistic police that can already boast Charonne and torture in Algeria.'[93] Writing in 1972, Pierre Vidal-Naquet observed that none of the flyers distributed during May–June 1968 alluded in any way to the 'anti-Algerian pogrom' of 17 October.[94] The perception of the police and *gendarmes* as unaccountable arms of the repressive state apparatus is one legacy of May '68 to have informed radical leftist politics ever since. Alain Geismar, who became a leader of one of the Maoist groups after May '68, said: 'in 1968 we were fighting the cops of Charonne. The slogan "CRS-SS", that might appear excessive, evoked for us the massacres of Algerians.'[95] Thus in 1968 itself there was only a 'shadow trace' of 17 October, without many participants being sensitized to the 1961 repression. Had Papon still been in charge of the Paris police by this point (he had left in 1967), 17 October may have had more visibility within left-wing discourses.

[88] Ross, *May* '68; N. de Maupeou Abboud, *Ouverture du ghetto étudiant*.

[89] Alain Schnapp and Pierre Vidal-Naquet, 'Esquisse d'une Introduction', in Schnapp and Vidal-Naquet (eds.), *Journal de la Commune étudiante* (Paris: Seuil, 1969).

[90] Einaudi, *La Bataille de Paris*, 274. [91] Ross, *May '68*, 34. [92] Ibid. 47.

[93] 'Les comités d'action du 3 mai', flyer dated 11 May 1968, reproduced in Schnapp and Vidal-Naquet, *Journal*, 226. [94] Vidal-Naquet, *La Torture*, 164.

[95] Quoted (unsourced) in Stora, *La Gangrène*, 224.

With hindsight, the legacy of May '68 has been deferred and at times indirect. We can view May '68, and crucially its aftermath, as a time and place for the intersection of different militant trajectories, and within specific organizations, due to the radical political 'space' the events fostered. In turn, this helps us to understand the low-level memory transmission and renewal within the far left in the months and years immediately afterwards. Many of those who campaigned regarding 17 October in the 1980s, had come through a militant trajectory of the Algerian War, May '68, and far-left activism (François Maspero, Jacques Jurquet, Alain Krivine, Alain Geismar).[96] Others, such as Pierre-Vidal-Naquet and Madeleine Rebérioux, were outside of the orbit of the far left but remained active in promoting this memory. Younger participants joined the May '68 or post-'68 activism and met the memory of 17 October in this context (Driss El-Yazami, Saïd Bouamama, Mogniss Abdallah). Within the far-left (in particular Maoism), the memory of 17 October 1961 acted as a counter-memory not only to the French and Algerian states, but also to the PCF and Socialists, increasingly seen as a bloc during their political collaboration during 1972–7.

Alain Krivine, for example, who had been in the UEC, Front universitaire antifasciste, Jeune Résistance, and anti-Vietnam war radicalism, emerged after 1966 as the figurehead of Trotskyism in France in the Jeunesse(s) communiste(s) révolutionnaire(s) and after 1968, the Ligue communiste révolutionnaire, whose newspaper, *Rouge* (Red), ran articles that mentioned 17 October.[97] The former PSU activists and those of its student wing, the Étudiants socialistes unifiés, also kept alive the memory of their wartime experiences.[98] Jean-Louis Péninou, who, as a journalist at *Libération* would be the first to promote the memory of 17 October on the French national stage in 1980 (see Chapter 11), had been a *porteur de valises*, active in the PSU and UEC, and had occupied posts of responsibility within the UNEF until 1968.[99] Georges Mattéi commemorated the eighth anniversary of 17 October in 1969, writing in the newspaper *Le Paria* to underline the anti-imperialist legacy of Algerian mobilizations for independence in France, to criticize the PCF's record during the Algerian War, and to call for greater solidarity between French people and immigrants.[100] Amongst the Maoists, it was the Gauche prolétarienne (GP) (subsequently La Cause du peuple) that often referred back to the Algerian War in its critique of anti-North African racism. For example, on 29 February 1972, just after the tenth anniversary of Charonne, the GP organized a protest march at Charonne against anti-Algerian racism.[101] Before the demonstration, Alain Geismar, who had been in anti-war

[96] The essential works are Hervé Hamon and Patrick Rotman, *Génération,* i. *Les Années de rêve* (Paris: Seuil, 1987) and *Génération,* ii. *Les Années de poudre* (Paris: Seuil, 1988).

[97] See *Rouge*, 893 (16–22 Nov. 1979), 16.

[98] See Édouard Depreux in *Tribune socialiste* (31 Oct. 1973).

[99] See Hamon and Rotman, *Génération* (both volumes).

[100] *Le Paria*, 1 (Dec. 1969), 1, 6–11.

[101] On this anniversary, see *L'Humanité* (8 Feb. 1972) and *Le Monde* (9 Feb. 1972).

groups, explained 17 October to activists.[102] The Maoists were trying to contest Charonne as the PCF's memory site.

Farid Aïchoune, who had not been told about 17 October by his Algerian parents and, as we have seen, had since confused 17 October with Charonne, was active within the GP.[103] Saïd Bouamama learnt about the demonstrations and their repression for the first time not from his parents (his father had been a wartime FLN militant), but from frequenting leftist groups post-'68; he was 'surprised and shaken' on learning of the October events.[104] Jean-Luc Einaudi, who has probably done more than any other person to champion the case of 17 October, similarly came across the memory of 17 October through his activism within the Maoist Parti communiste marxiste-léniniste de France, led by Jacques Jurquet, the latter himself a former *porteur de valises*.[105] These trajectories and experiences bear out Halbwachs's observations about memory; individuals discover a transmitted, non-experiential memory (*mémoire empruntée*) by frequenting groups who carry such memories, since we all frequent various groups. When there is no familial evocation, for example, and no exposure to such memories in the public sphere (e.g. media, education), coming across this memory due to (here) political activism was the only context for memory transmission.[106] But as the ethnographer Roger Bastide reminds us, going against Halbwachs's apparent primacy of the 'collective' over the individual: 'the individual isn't just a site on which groups meet: the group is also a place of exchange between individuals'. Inter-personal contacts played a significant role in the transmission of these militant memories of 17 October.[107]

Between 1968 and 1977, many groups within the nebulous far left in France attempted to incorporate the most marginalized and exploited sections of the working class.[108] In mobilizing in favour of migrants, the French far left in general moved onto a political terrain from which the mainstream left had largely withdrawn. To this end, Maoists (GP and Vive la Révolution) went into both shanty towns and immigrant districts such as the Goutte d'Or to defend immigrants' rights and campaign against racism.[109] Activists criticized the paternalist management of migrant hostels, the policing of the shanty towns, and long-lasting Paris police attitudes towards Algerians.[110] Not unlike during the weeks

[102] Hamon and Rotman, *Génération*, ii. 392.
[103] Interview (J.H.), Paris, 7 June 2002.
[104] Interview (J.H.), Lille, 6 Apr. 2001.
[105] Jean-Luc Einaudi, 'Une vie de combats', Preface to Jacques Jurquet, *À contre-courant 1963–1986* (Pantin: Le Temps des cerises, 2001), 5–10. Einaudi only came across 17 Oct. 1961 for the first time in 1980.
[106] Halbwachs, *La Mémoire collective*.
[107] Roger Bastide, 'Mémoire collective et sociologie du bricolage', *L'Année sociologique*, 21 (1970), 65–108, 91.
[108] See Christophe Bourseiller, *Les Maoïstes: La Folle histoire des gardes rouges françaises* (Paris: Plon, 1996), 107. See also Yvan Gastaut, *L'Immigration et l'opinion en France sous la Vè République* (Paris: Seuil, 2000), 149–63.
[109] See Daniel Gordon, '"A Nanterre, ça bouge": Immigrés et gauchistes en banlieue, 1968 à 1971', *Historiens et géographes*, 383 (2003), 75–86; Claude Mauriac, *Le Temps immobile,* iii. *Et comme l'espérance est violente* (Paris: Grasset, 1976), 259–592.
[110] See APP-HA60, report on an attack on three SAT offices in 20 Feb. 1970 by Maoist sympathizers denouncing the SAT as a 'parallel police'.

after the October 1961 demonstrations, activists and journalists 'discovered' immigrants' appalling living conditions. Immigrant reactions to such solidarity were mixed; immigrants realized the need for autonomous political action since French trade unions and parties often did not take into account the specific problems immigrants faced.[111] However, as the 1970s progressed, immigrant mobilizations also tended to seek greater autonomy from the far left that they viewed as instrumentalizing such campaigns. Support for some mobilizations also came from the MRAP, PSU, concerned left-wing Christians, and humanitarian groups. Johanna Siméant has shown the importance of the Algerian War in the political trajectories of these French activists in determining their support for 'immigrant causes'.[112]

One example where 17 October 1961 was directly invoked was with the Arab Worker's Movement (Mouvement des travailleurs arabes, MTA, 1972–7), an organization bringing together students and workers from the Arab diaspora (Tunisia, Morocco, Algeria, Syria, Lebanon) close to the GP and inspired by identification with the Palestinian cause around various Palestinian Committees (Comités Palestine) in Paris and Marseille.[113] Within the Paris MTA, the memory of the Algerian War was present due to the participation of former FLN and/or GP activists in the movement. The MTA used 17 October as a strategic resource in the fight against racism. Following the killing in police custody of Mohamed Diab in Versailles (29 November 1972),[114] MTA organizers routed their (banned) protest demonstration on 16 December 1972 along that area of the Grands Boulevards in Paris outside the Rex Cinèma where police had fired on protestors on 17 October, in an attempt to appropriate the symbolic space of the capital. Aware of the different political context since 1961, the organizers nevertheless drew a parallel with the continuing high levels of anti-Algerian racism. The march on the Justice Ministry started from '*Bonne nouvelle = le cinèma Rex*—where Algerians reddened the paving stones with their blood in October 1961', the aim being to call attention to 'the horrors that immigrants are still enduring today'.[115] Campaigners appealed to French society for support, referring specifically to examples of Franco-Algerian solidarity from the Algerian War, demanding truth, justice, and police accountability in relation to Diab:[116] at this point, campaigners formulated no specific demands to government relating to 17 October itself. This

[111] See Catherine Wihtol de Wenden, *Les Immigrés et la politique* (Paris: Presses de la FNSP, 1988), 213–19.

[112] Siméant, *La Cause des sans-papiers*, 177.

[113] On the MTA, see Aissaoui, 'Immigration, Ethnicity and National Identity', part 2, 'North African Nationalism during the 1970s in France: The Case of the MTA'.

[114] See Fausto Giudice, *Arabicides: Une chronique française, 1970–1991* (Paris: La Découverte, 1992), 83–92.

[115] BDIC, Fonds Saïd Bouziri, Microfiche 214/4, anonymous, undated 'Lettre à un camarade en prison'.

[116] On the MTA's anti-racist campaigning, see Rabah Aissaoui, 'Le Mouvement des travailleurs arabes: Ethnicity, Antiracism and Political Mobilisation amongst Maghrebi Immigrants during the 1970s in France', in Yvette Rocheron and Christopher Rolfe (eds.), *Shifting Frontiers of France and Francophonie* (Oxford: Peter Lang, 2004).

partial reframing of the symbolic use of 17 October within an anti-racist agenda (amongst other themes) would continue into the 1980s and beyond.

If the early 1970s saw a wave of racist violence in Paris, the situation was arguably worse in the south of France, where many far-right, pro-*Algérie française* activists and *pied-noir* groups operated.[117] What resulted was a mixture of 'spontaneous' anti-Algerian violence and planned political violence between 1969 and 1977 in particular, that caused at least seventy Algerian deaths overall, most of which have not been solved.[118] Some of the organized killings that peaked in 1973 used plastic explosives and grenades, and were redolent of OAS attacks on Algerians (whether in France or Algeria) during 1961–2, again underlining the very palpable wartime sequels for Algerians in France.[119] President Boumediene, keen to assert Algerian sovereignty, reacted by suspending Algerian emigration to France, arguing that the French state could not (or would not) protect Algerian nationals. The MTA organized successful general strikes of 'Arab' workers in Paris and Marseille against such violence in September 1973. Immigrant mobilizations continued to develop throughout the 1970s, successfully challenging the efforts of the Amicale, PCF, CGT, and French state to contain them. Another autonomous organization, the Algerian Worker's Committee (Comité des travailleurs algériens), was set up that consisted of left-wing former wartime FLN militants in opposition to Boumediene. In competition with the Amicale, this committee held its own, counter-memorial commemorative ceremonies for 17 October.[120]

The far-left presence in specific organizations waned as revolutionary movements fragmented around 1975. What was the legacy of this period of militancy? Short-lasting, and marginal within the Algerian migrant communities to whom they appealed, these organizations appear at first glance to have had only limited impact. However, these organizations and movements were important sites of political socialization regarding the memory of the Algerian War.[121] Many of the activist 'entrepreneurs'[122] involved in the MTA were of North African origin but came to France after having studied abroad and had already acquired experience of political action (e.g. Driss El-Yazami in Morocco, and Saïd Bouziri in Tunisia). In France, they discovered the memory of the Algerian War through their contact with former FLN militants or their French supporters.[123] The MTA saw the importance of linking cultural politics and specific campaigning, anticipating the more general 'cultural turn' of radical politics in the mid–late 1970s.

One of the legacies of the MTA was the founding, by several former MTA militants (Driss El-Yazami, Farid Aïchoune, Saïd Bouziri) of the counter-cultural

[117] See MacMaster, *Colonial Migrants*, 211–13; Benjamin Stora, *Le Transfert d'une mémoire: de l'Algérie française au racisme anti-arabe* (Paris: La Découverte, 1999).

[118] Gastaut, *L'immigration et l'opinion*, 268. [119] Ibid. 267.

[120] Interview (J.H.) with Kamal*, Paris, 14 Oct. 2002.

[121] See Christine Polac, 'Quand "les immigrés" prennent la parole', in Pascal Perrineau (ed.), *L'Engagement politique: Déclin ou mutation?* (Paris: Presses de la FNSP, 1994).

[122] The term is from Siméant, *La Cause des sans-papiers*.

[123] Interview (J.H.) with Driss El-Yazami, Paris, 4 Mar. 2002.

project Sans Frontière (Without Borders, 1979–85).[124] From its inception, Sans Frontière championed the memory of immigration, and within that, the memory of the Algeran War and of 17 October.[125] Many former MTA activists came to the realization in the late 1970s and early 1980s that there had been a lack of memory transmission from many Algerian migrant parents to their children.[126] Because of their personal, familial, or political trajectories, many Sans Frontière activists were well aware of colonial violence and the link between the racism of the Algerian War and that of the 1970s and 1980s. They therefore sought to appropriate memories of 17 October to refuse the reproduction of silence and amnesia regarding colonial violence and immigration. Several different groups were therefore already evoking 17 October by the 1970s.

Sans Frontière also wanted to intervene due to the ways political and media discourses were singling out a North African 'second generation' (*deuxième génération*)—the sons and daughters of migrants. Such dominant representations had several key characteristics. First, such discourses reified the complexity of age groups and morphology of Algerian migration: with the undoubted increasing number of young people of Algerian heritage in France in the late 1970s, dominant representations portrayed one standardized migrant trajectory of arrivals in the 1950s and 1960s of single Algerian men who would then be 'followed' by wife and children. As we have already seen with the examples of Farid Aïchoune, Samia Messaoudi, and Khaled Benaïssa (amongst others), this distorted the reality of migrant trajectories and histories, negating the presence of migrant families during the Algerian War.[127] Second, these dominant discourses presented young people as a 'problem' from a number of perspectives. In a highly gendered discourse, post-colonial stereotyping of Algerian males centred on criminalization, and alleged their refusal to 'integrate', whereas young women were represented as 'passive' and 'submissive' and, in theory, more predisposed to 'integrate'.[128] The negative targeting of young males had particular spatial dynamics as it no longer focused on the inner-city districts, shanty towns, or temporary housing, but rather on the public housing estates (*cités HLM*) in the run-down suburbs (*banlieues*) and the 'dangers' that these areas and their inhabitants supposedly presented to the authorities. Simone Bonnafous has identified a key shift in dominant political and media representations during the later 1970s and early 1980s, during which time 'immigration' was constituted as causing a 'problem', and the mainstream left focused not so much on the problems faced by migrant communities but on those 'problems' these groups allegedly caused.[129] Young people from racialized groups, in particular those of Algerian heritage, duly sought to contest these

[124] See Polac, 'Quand "les immigrés" prennent la parole'.

[125] On Sans Frontière, see also Ch. 11.

[126] See Mimoun Hallous, 'Les Grandes Heures du Mouvement des travailleurs arabes', in Ahmed Boubeker and Mogniss H. Abdallah (eds.), *Douce France: La Saga du Mouvement beur 1983–1993* (Paris: Im'Média, 1993), 80–2.

[127] See Noiriel, *Le Creuset français*, 211–12.

[128] Nacira Guénif-Souilamas, *Des 'beurettes' aux descendantes d'immigrants nord-africains* (Paris: Grasset, 2000), 21–4.

[129] S. Bonnafous, *L'Immigration prise aux mots* (Paris: Kimé, 1991).

negative representations.[130] However, as older anti-racist activists discovered, these younger activists, often of Algerian heritage, in many cases had little knowledge of the struggle for agency, dignity, and independence undertaken by their parents, showing that inter-generational memory transmission within Algerian migration remained difficult. During the period 1962–79, only thin threads within activist and migrant memories therefore maintained some memories of 17 October, outside the official representations of the Amicale. However, the very limited memory transmission that did take place started to create a richer, inter-generational dynamic that would continue in subsequent decades, to which the discussion now turns.

[130] See Ch. 11.

11

Emergent Memories, 1980–1997?

This chapter assesses how and why the visibility of the events of 17 October gradually resurfaced in political and media debate between 1980 and 1997, in the light of political and social developments in both France and Algeria. Whereas in the 1960s and 1970s, low-level transmission of memory regarding 17 October took place mostly on an inter-personal basis within the family or radical left organizations and movements, in the 1990s, building on the impact of the anti-racist movements of the 1980s that saw descendants of Algerian migrants emerge as significant collective political actors in France, new groups formed with a strategy of bringing the memories of 17 October onto the public stage. Their aim was to formulate specific demands for official recognition, truth, and justice and to transmit an awareness of 17 October to wider sectors of French society.

A FRAGMENTED RESURFACING (1980–1990)?

While various attempts emerged during the 1980s to evoke the 17 October events, their fragmented nature did not enable a cogent and continuous general campaign to appear in France. For example, working at the left-wing newspaper *Libération*, former anti-colonial and student activist Jean-Louis Péninou had been shocked by the difference in reaction to acts of anti-Semitism (such as the fatal bombing of the synagogue in the rue Copernic on 3 October 1980), whereas the 17 October killings remained largely hidden. Georges Mattéi, a former *porteur de valises*, agreed, and Péninou and he ran a three-page spread on 17 October 1980, denouncing the 'racist massacre' and its covering up. Péninou had to explain to his often-incredulous colleagues that they were writing about October 1961 and not Charonne.[1] *L'Humanité* the next day contained a short story mentioning 17 October, and remained on the defensive regarding its reactions following the repression.[2] With less political pressure placed on the media after the left gained power in 1981, evocations of controversial wartime events (e.g. torture, 17 October) formed part of the 'rhetoric of unearthing and uncovering'.[3] Both *L'Humanité*

[1] See Jean-Louis Péninou in *Libération* (18 Oct. 1980). [2] See *L'Humanité* (18 Oct. 1980).
[3] Béatrice Fleury-Vilatte, *La Mémoire télévisuelle de la guerre d'Algérie* (Paris: L'Harmattan/Institut national de l'audiovisuel, 2000), 161.

and *Libération* started to carry annual stories on the repression. For the 1981 anniversary, French state television screened the first news item on 17 October by Marcel Trillat that included testimonies from Algerians whom police had thrown into the Seine.

However, the lack of response to the publication of Michel Levine's unambiguously entitled *Ratonnades d'octobre* in 1985 gives a good indication of the lack of receptivity of French public opinion to the airing of wartime atrocities. Some bookshops refused to display Levine's title, and he was so disgruntled with the book's low-scale impact that he threw away his material.[4] Crime-writer Didier Daeninckx, whose 1984 detective novel *Meurtres pour mémoire* (Murders for the Record) was the first fictional piece in which 17 October played a central role, remembers how, upon publication, 'everyone was incredulous, I had to provide proof and show my sources', indicating the uphill struggle memory activists faced.[5]

The wider political context explains in part the fragmentary nature of these 'revelations'. François Mitterrand's accession to power in May 1981—and the Socialist-Communist government elected shortly afterwards—marked an important political shift in French politics after decades of right-wing control. However, for the Parti socialiste (PS) and PCF, re-evaluating their Algerian past could bring little political gain. On the Socialist side, Mitterrand as Interior Minister in November 1954 had defended the Republican unitary state via an integrationist policy, and had been hostile to negotiations with the FLN. He remained as Justice Minister under Guy Mollet's tenure (1956–7).[6] In November 1982, Mitterrand forced through the last major piece of amnesty legislation, due in part to electoral promises to *pied-noir* pressure groups. This controversial new law normalized the career paths of police, army, or administrative officers dismissed between 1961 and 1963 for their OAS activities.[7] These measures therefore included some of the police and army officers whose activities were examined in Part I, sending an ambivalent message to civil society. Gaston Defferre, who became Interior Minister in 1981, had intervened in the Senate after 17 October 1961 to denounce the repression. A written question to the Assemblée nationale tabled by Paris Socialist deputy Georges Sarre asked Defferre 'if he doesn't think that time has come to shed full light on the events that took place on 17 October 1961', events that Sarre described as 'tragic and racist'.[8] However, the official enquiries led nowhere.[9]

Indeed, with the PCF in the governing coalition, more 'movement' was apparent on Charonne than on 17 October. The twentieth anniversary of Charonne saw the unveiling of a plaque to the memory of the 'victims of repression' at the Métro

[4] Interview (J.H.) with Michel Levine, Paris, 30 Aug. 2003.

[5] Quoted (unsourced) in Gaïti, 'Les Ratés de l'histoire', 33. See Didier Daeninckx, *Meurtres pour mémoire* (Paris: Gallimard, 1984).

[6] After 1958, Mitterrand, opposed to de Gaulle, adopted a pro-federalist position on Algeria.

[7] Gacon, *L'Amnistie*, 303–5.

[8] APP-HA111, dossier 'Question écrite à l'Assemblée nationale, 9 November 1981'.

[9] See APP-HA111, Note Directeur Police Judiciaire, 18 Nov. 1981, and Prefect of Police to Interior Minister, 29 Dec. 1981.

station of the same name.[10] At the unveiling ceremony, the head of the CGT, Henri Krasucki, spoke of the 'deadly *ratonnades* during the course of which so many Algerian workers were assassinated in Paris'.[11] Lionel Jospin, who was General Secretary of the PS at the time, spoke publicly at the Charonne Métro station on 8 February 1982 to remind people that 'it is right to honour the French dead, but don't let's forget the others', referring to the Algerian victims of state violence during the war.[12] However, no one from the Interior Ministry attended the ceremony: the then president of the Constitutional Council was Roger Frey, Interior Minister in October 1961 and February 1962. At the official level, therefore, the left's return to power produced few tangible immediate results regarding 17 October. Campaigning impetus again came from outside the established left, as the following sections show.

ANTI-RACIST MEMORIES, 1980–1990

In the previous chapter, we saw a new 'generation' of carriers of the memory of 17 October start to develop, in particular descendants of Algerian economic migrants or students from the Maghreb. In the 1980s, another 'micro-generation' of left-wing activists emerged, often comprising young people of Maghrebi origin and accompanied by these older activists.[13] As Abdelmalek Sayad has written, each generation by definition situates itself within a different historical and political context that has 'generated' it.[14] The context of the 1980s explained the importance of anti-racist social movements that mobilized the case of 17 October, often as part of wider discourses of identity construction amongst Algerian descendants. If such movements made few demands on government concerning 17 October at this point, it was because the symbolic importance of the repression largely functioned 'internally' to the migrant communities and their descendants. This context therefore brought a reframing of representations of 17 October from individuals and groups that had a different perspective than that of the former demonstrators, one that usually belonged to a transmitted memory, producing a complex inter-generational memorial dynamic.

Recognizing the fragility of the transmission of memories of colonial migration and the Algerian War within the Algerian communities, the Sans Frontière (1979–85) counter-cultural initiative sought to create inter-generational solidarity between Algerian parents and their descendants, grounding the descendants'

[10] The plaque received governmental approval (*Le Monde*, 10 Feb. 1982).

[11] *L'Humanité* (22 Mar. 1982). [12] Quoted in *Le Monde* (10 Feb. 1982).

[13] The term 'micro-generation', used hereafter, describes a 'half-generation', roughly covering a 10-year period, and allows for a more nuanced analysis of the complex inter-generational memorial dynamics (e.g. between older and younger siblings) and the often rapidly evolving political contexts within which these dynamics are situated.

[14] See Abdelmalek Sayad, 'Le Mode de génération des générations "immigrées" ', *L'Homme et la Société* 111/2 (Jan.–June 1994), 155–74.

trajectories in France. For example, in 1984, co-founder of Sans Frontière Farid Aïchoune, after a spate of racist murders of young people of Maghrebi origin, declared: 'from the killings of 14 July 1953 and the 17 October massacre to the murders of Maghrebis in recent years, the same hatred seems to span generations, within certain groups of the population. Our roots are blood-stained, and memory cannot be selective, and even less so give in to the endless calls to forget.'[15] Since the 1980s, campaigning groups have often used memories of state violence—and of 17 October in particular—within a symbolic function. In this respect, 17 October has been mobilized to help understand the wider concerns brought by symbolic injustices and at times physical violence experienced by racialized post-colonial minorities in France, many of whose younger members were previously unaware of the repression of the Algerian War or earlier. Racist attacks, intimidation, the lack of police and judicial accountability, police stop-and-search checks—all practices central to wartime repression as we saw in Part I—have continued since 1962, albeit in a different political context. Hostile political discourses on 'immigration' and, after 1983, the electoral success of the Front national (FN), gave greater confidence to and federated the various racist constituencies within French society. Furthermore, many descendants of Algerians since the early 1980s found themselves caught between the invocation to 'assimilate' and hence distance themselves from the cultural heritage of their parents and, on the other hand, the FN's deliberate, aggressive cultivation of colonialist nostalgia. If Sans Frontière and other groups mobilized the case of 17 October, it was both a sign of the weight of the past—perceived continuities in racism—and a strategic choice made from the repertoire of possible historical events that could potentially 'speak' to young people of Algerian heritage to construct anti-racist agency.[16] Memory here is therefore not just about how present and past are articulated: it also concerns how groups and individuals strategically invoke the past to bring about social change via collective action. Social memories of previous examples of colonial violence have formed a 'narrative of resistance' to racism, be that in relation to the state, racist groups or parties, or other groups.[17]

Sans Frontière and other groups and individuals attempted both memory preservation and recovery. However, given the time lapse since 1961, and the inter-generational dynamics we have already evoked, what was 'preserved' or 'recovered' strongly reflected the new context in which it appeared, and the new actors who appropriated, articulated, and reframed these memories. For example, some analysts pointed out that, by stressing the racist nature of anti-Algerian

[15] 'La Mémoire et l'oubli', *Sans Frontière*, 88–9 (undated—late 1984), 27.

[16] On the question of 'choice of the past' and 'weight of the past', see Marie-Claire Lavabre, 'Du poids et du choix du passé: Lecture critique du "Syndrome de Vichy" ', in Denis Peschanski, Michael Pollak, and Henry Rousso (eds.), *Histoire politique et sciences sociales* (Brussels: Complexe, 1991).

[17] Fentress and Wickham, *Social Memory*, 117. See also Jim House, 'Antiracist Memories: The Case of 17 October 1961 in Historical Perspective', *Modern and Contemporary France*, 9/3 (2001), 355–68.

repression, the invocations of 17 October within anti-racist memories failed to link the event to its Algerian War context and hence 'undertranslated' that past.[18] Another sign of the shift in perspective, as new generations publicly took on board the memories of 17 October, was that, with the exception of Sétif 1945, the violent repression of demonstrations in Algeria (those of 10–11 December 1960, for example) rarely appears in such memorial narratives. For Kamel Chachoua, contrary to their Algerian parents, the social imaginary of their descendants centres on France.[19] Evoking the October 1961 repression that took place in the relatively familiar urban topography of Paris therefore provided a tangible memorial representation.

The main objectives for many activists at this point were to achieve self-expression and articulate what it meant to be of Maghrebi origin in the France of the 1980s. Strategic use of memorial discourses accompanied an equally conscious process of rearticulated identification. Close to Sans Frontière, the Association pour une nouvelle génération immigrée, bringing together mostly young people of Kabyle origin, also sought to underline the importance of reinvesting the memory of their parents' generations and beyond.[20] While the references to the Algerian War might have seemed capable of unifying many of Algerian origin, in fact they continued to be a source of some tension in particular in relation to the *harkis*. As anti-racist activist Mogniss Abdallah asked, descendants of *harkis* might suffer similar levels of racism, but could they identify with 17 October?[21]

New vectors developed to express the more assertive identity politics of the early 1980s, as what became the 'Beur' generation emerged.[22] Nacer Kettane's novel *Le Sourire de Brahim* (Brahim's Smile, 1985) was not the first fictional representation of 17 October, but it gave a central place to the demonstration as a founding event in individual, family, and group memory recovery. Other authors also sought to understand the various levels of silence and occultation that clouded their family trajectories and Franco-Algerian identities.[23] Kettane had been a co-founder of the Radio-Beur initiative in 1981, as the left opened up the FM band. Radio-Beur (now Beur-FM) in fact gave particular voice to the Kabyle diaspora. From its inception, the radio produced programmes on Franco-Algerian history, its phone-in programmes providing a sympathetic and relatively anonymous forum, although there was initially some reluctance for Algerians to come

[18] Gaïti, 'Les Ratés de l'histoire', 32; Thénault, 'La Manifestation des Algériens', 128.

[19] Kamel Chachoua, 'Sortir du silence', *Zaàma*, 4–5 (Nov. 2003), 35–9, 38–9.

[20] See Youcef Bousâa, 'Histoire de l'ANGI', *Les Cahiers de la nouvelle génération*, 1 (1984), 4–13, 7.

[21] 'Mémoire floue pour un manifeste', *Im'Média*, 2 (Spring 1985), 35.

[22] *Beur* was a term fashioned by young people of Maghrebi origin who sought to avoid the stygmatization associated with the term *Arabe*, without denying their identifications with an 'Arab' identity. See Sylvie Durmelat, 'Petite histoire du mot *beur*: Ou comment prendre la parole quand on vous la prête', *French Cultural Studies*, 9/2 (1998), 191–207; see also Richard L. Derderian, *North Africans in Contemporary France: Becoming Visible* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 2004).

[23] Nacer Kettane, *Le Sourire de Brahim* (Paris: Denoël, 1985). See also e.g. Mehdi Lallaoui, *Les Beurs de Seine* (Paris: Arcantère, 1985); Tassadit Imache, *Une fille sans histoire* (Paris: Calmann-Lévy, 1989).

forward when the radio started discussion programmes on 17 October.[24] We can see here the start of a process that would gain momentum over the next twenty years, whereby, as memory activist Mehdi Lallaoui puts it, the children of those Algerians who had been in Paris in 1961 'have picked up the thread again of this painful, violent memory'.[25]

These initiatives either immediately preceded or accompanied the emergence of larger anti-racist social movements by young people in the years 1983–4 and that addressed racism, police harassment, and violence, deportations and unemployment. The Marche pour l'égalité et contre le racisme in 1983 (March for Equality and Against Racism),[26] followed by Convergence '84 pour l'Égalité (Convergence '84 for Equality) in 1984,[27] gave voice to the increasing social desperation of the inhabitants in the poor outer suburbs (*banlieues*) and their disappointment with the left's record in government.[28] While both these mobilizations faced problems of political alliances, and were fraught with dissension regarding the extent to which ethnic identity could form a viable basis for mobilization, they created networks and a new 'space' for the discussion of questions of equality, anti-racism, citizenship, and memory.[29] Both mobilizations were multi-ethnic, although young people of Algerian heritage predominated.

The 1983 mobilization, commonly termed La Marche des Beurs (the *Beurs*' March) sensitized some participants to the memory of 17 October, in part due to the presence of older, often Parisian activists who accompanied the movement and expressed regret at the absence of awareness of 17 October amongst the younger 'micro-generation' of anti-racist activists. It was in the immediate aftermath of this protest that a group of Parisian activists commemorated the massacre by the Canal Saint-Martin in December 1983. This was the first time that the descendants of the demonstrators of 17 October organized their own commemoration, revealing the importance the event represented, often for young people discovering the massacre for the first time. Farid Aïchoune wrote at the time: 'It was yesterday in the middle of Paris, it was our mothers and fathers who were being killed: but for the oldest amongst us, it was us, too.'[30]

Following on from these initiatives, other organizations were appearing that would also speak of 17 October, although the anti-racist terrain fissured, leading to competing initiatives. Controversial anti-racist association SOS-Racisme (1984–) presented itself as an ethnically inclusive association defining itself against the

[24] Interview (J.H.) with Samia Messaoudi, Paris, 12 June 2002. Messaoudi was a co-founder of Radio-Beur.

[25] Interview (J.H.) with Mehdi Lallaoui, Marseille, 27 Feb. 2002.

[26] This protest march left Marseille on 15 Oct. 1983, eventually reaching Paris on 3 Dec. 1983 accompanied by 100,000 supporters. See Saïd Bouamama, *Dix ans de marche des Beurs: Chronique d'un mouvement avorté* (Paris: Desclée de Brouwer, 1994), 41–75.

[27] While also opposing racism, Convergence stressed the richness of France's identity due to cultural diversity. See Bouamama, *Dix ans de marche*, 77–112.

[28] For the period 1977–83, see Mogniss H. Abdallah, *J'y suis, J'y reste: Les Luttes de l'immigration en France depuis les années soixante* (Paris: Reflex, 2000), 56–62.

[29] See Bouamama, *Dix ans de marche*.

[30] *Sans Frontière*, 82 (Jan. 1984), 8.

perceived ethnic exclusivism of the 'Beur' movements of 1983–4.[31] Harlem Désir's transmitted memory of 17 October 1961 came from the UNEF and Trotskyism, within which both he and co-founder Julien Dray had previously been active. For Désir, this memory 'was part of our political culture'.[32] First vice-president of SOS-Racisme, Kaïssa Titous, was the daughter of Algerian parents: her father worked at the Boulogne-Billancourt Renault car factory, and her mother had participated in protests in suburban Boulogne following the 17 October demonstrations. SOS-Racisme therefore represented a convergence of personal and militant trajectories in relation to 17 October. In 1985, on the first anniversary of 17 October after the association's creation, SOS-Racisme fixed a commemorative plaque next to the Seine that stated: 'Paris 17 October 1961–17 Octobre 1985. In honour of the victims of racist attacks in France'.[33] However, the growing interest in the commemoration did not bring consensus: four separate, poorly attended commemorations in 1985 attracted participants from specific political, national, and cultural backgrounds. Also on 17 October that year, other groups (e.g. Radio-Beur, MRAP) gathered, highlighting the divisions of the time within anti-racism.[34] A third commemoration by the Union des travailleurs arabes showed the relevance of the memory to older, often first-generation migrants who could not identify with the Amicale's commemorations.

After 1987, the influence of the anti-racist movement—including SOS-Racisme—declined considerably, and SOS-Racisme did not give a central place to 17 October. Furthermore, in the second half of the 1980s, mainstream parties of both left and right reaffirmed the primacy of the integrationist model intrinsic to Republicanism, whereby individuals, not 'communities', integrate by adopting the dominant national cultural model. The left ended its partial flirtation with a limited favouring of the expression of minority cultural identities during the early 1980s, since the PS viewed this as playing into the hands of the FN's increasingly differentialist racism. In this context, any strategy that constructed a collective identity around 17 October could be interpreted as a retreat into 'communalism'. However, the memory of 17 October has also been associated with activists who, while taking an integrationist line, and initially identifying with the PS, also underlined the way in which colonial violence and contemporary anti-Maghrebi violence were intimately linked. The Mouvement des Beurs Civiques (Civic *Beurs*' Movement), formed by members of Radio-Beur such as Abdel Aïssou, organized a commemoration on 17 October 1990 at Charonne, and linked 17 October to racist crimes in France.[35]

[31] On SOS-Racisme, see Robert Gibb, 'The Politics of a Republican Anti-Racism in Contemporary France: An Ethnographic Study of the Anti-Racist Association *SOS-Racisme*', Ph.D. dissertation (Edinburgh University, 2001).

[32] Interview (J.H.) with Harlem Désir, Paris, 25 Aug. 1995.

[33] See *Le Monde* (19 Oct. 1985).

[34] See Bouamama, *Dix ans de marche*, 113–51.

[35] See *Libération* (18 Oct. 1990) and Virginie Chenal, 'Le 17 octobre, l'oubli revisité', DEA dissertation (Université de Paris-X, 1999), 100. The Mouvement des beurs civiques then became the Mouvement des droits civiques (Civic Rights Movement).

There is little evidence that, by 1991, the memories of 17 October had become 'nationalized' or 'collectivized' within the Algerian communities and the French left, let alone within French society more generally. Henry Rousso has spoken of the difficulties of the dual function of memory that serves to create and solidify bonds within groups at the same time as promote awareness at a national level.[36] Whereas in the 1980s, campaigners focused on the first aspect, with no strategy of addressing governments with specific demands, the 1990s saw an important change to include the formulation of specific demands to government and attempts at wider awareness-raising.

REFRAMING THE MEMORIES OF 17 OCTOBER 1961 IN FRANCE (1991–1997): THE POLITICS OF SYMBOLIC REPARATION

The main reason for the increased public visibility of 17 October at the thirtieth anniversary was the emergence of a new carrier of the memory, the multi-ethnic association Au nom de la mémoire (In Memory's Name, ANM, 1990–). ANM had formed in part due to its founders (Mehdi Lallaoui, Samia Messaoudi, Agnès Denis, David Assouline, and Anne Tristan) recognizing that the memory of 17 October remained confined to specific sectors of French society,[37] and that the commemorations during the 1980s had lacked unity.[38] More generally, the association sought to encourage a reflection on France's colonial legacies. These memory activists, supported by the MRAP, LDH, and other left-wing groups, also set about trying to establish the truth behind the events of October 1961 via a film,[39] and a book,[40] a Sorbonne-based conference, and a deputation to the Assemblée nationale demanding access to official archives. These initiatives occurred at the same time as the most detailed study to date of 17 October was published, Jean-Luc Einaudi's *La Bataille de Paris*, that provided another source of counter-knowledge with which to challenge the official French version.[41] Using their local political contacts, ANM placed the first commemorative stele in France to the victims of 17 October, under the bridge at suburban Bezons, downstream of Paris, where police had thrown several Algerians into the Seine on or following 17 October. The local Prefect had the stele removed.

Due to these more numerous initiatives, the thirtieth anniversary was extensively covered in the left-wing media in France and saw up to 10,000 demonstrators follow the symbolic route from the Canal Saint-Martin to the Rex Cinèma, marching under the banner 'No to racism, no to forgetting. For the

[36] H. Rousso, *La Hantise du passé* (Paris: Textuel, 1998), 33.
[37] Interview (J.H.) with Mehdi Lallaoui, Marseille, 27 Feb. 2002.
[38] Chenal, 'Le 17 octobre, l'oubli revisité', 101. [39] Tristan, *Le Silence du fleuve*.
[40] Ibid. [41] This book is discussed in the General Introduction.

right to memory.'[42] Importantly, these commemorative sites were free of association with the French left or the Algerian Amicale. The Mouvement des droits civiques also held a gathering at the Charonne Métro station, the last time such a commemoration occurred, as 17 October began to emerge from the shadow of Charonne. After 1991, a key memorial space in central Paris took shape, with the selectivity of choice that implies. At Saint-Michel, the commemorations take place within yards of Paris police headquarters. Since 1992, the Pont Saint-Michel, from which protestors were thrown into the Seine, has become the key site, as the commemoration is ritualized, adopting a specific date and form. The Pont Saint-Michel setting reminds us of the disappearance of Algerian bodies carried away by the current of the Seine, to resurface further downstream or be lost to the Atlantic. The memory site at Saint-Michel can evoke—for some families—the double loss: no family member, no body to mourn. The river marks the absence of bodily trace that the gathering commemorates. The gathering commemorates the dead, the means of killing, and the cover-up, although it implicitly focuses attention on killings in central Paris. For some Algerian former demonstrators, each commemoration is, literally, the reliving of the journey into central Paris on 17 October 1961. Yet while commemoration is certainly, in Robert Gildea's words, about 'remembering in common'[43] and sharing symbolic meaning, we have seen that the symbolic investments in these counter-memorial activities for previous demonstrators and subsequent generations of Algerians, for French witnesses, or other concerned individuals, are rarely the same.

In the 1990s, a more consensual series of demands emerged likely to federate the various interested campaigning parties concerning 17 October, notably due to the influence of ANM and MRAP. In particular, such campaigners articulated demands for symbolic reparations in the form of truth, recognition, and justice that continue to frame debates on 17 October.[44] While 17 October continued to be evoked within anti-racism and the memories of colonial migrations, specific campaigns started to be devoted to 17 October that sought to reframe the memories of the repression, and its occultation, along with the need for memorial re-emergence, within a discourse of the right to memory (*le droit à la mémoire*).[45] However, given the political sensitivity of such demands, even this more consensual reframing of demands faced severe difficulties.

In the early 1990s, while annual commemorations remembered the dead, the numbers and identity of the Algerian dead in many cases remained uncertain. For some, this continuing official French obfuscation, that studies and films started to reveal, constituted a symbolic violence. Illustrating two generations of anti-racist

[42] *Le Monde* (19 Oct. 1991).

[43] Robert Gildea, *The Past in French History* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1994), 10.

[44] For a useful overview of such questions, see Sharon F. Lean, 'Is Truth Enough? Reparations and Reconciliation in Latin America', in Torpey, *Politics and the Past*, here esp. 172.

[45] See Chenal, 'Le 17 octobre, l'oubli revisité', 101–8.

and memory activism, ANM and MRAP were at the forefront of what Mark Osiel calls the 'social movement for factual recovery'.[46] These groups, supported by leftist parties and associations, framed their truth work within a discourse of citizenship, demanding to see what the state had done in the name of its citizens.[47] This was in fact a revival of a particular oppositional discourse from the Algerian War itself (see Chapters 7 and 8). For ANM and MRAP, while state violence may only have affected certain groups within society directly, violence deployed in the name of the state implicated all citizens, thus providing a potentially transversal thematic by suggesting that all should feel concerned by 17 October. For campaigners, the French state, its institutions and personnel therefore had an obligation of transparency and accountability. Jean-Luc Einaudi specifically describes his work within such motivations: 'I consider that I've done the work of a citizen who wants to know what has been done in the name of the French people.'[48]

For these organizations, such obligations should lead the state to open the archives, one particular demand that campaigners voiced from the early 1990s onwards, along with requests for the teaching of 17 October within state school history programmes. Demands from MRAP and ANM tended to presume that official archives are themselves unproblematic, easily readable, all-encompassing, and therefore a factual bulwark, whereas official archives are often incomplete, and seek to distort and manipulate the historical record, as we saw in Part I. However, for campaigning groups, the inscription of 17 October within French public memory was predicated upon establishing an undisputed minimal but authoritative account of state violence that, in their view, only scrutiny of state archives could provide. Refusal to grant access was perceived as a continuation of the cover-up that had necessitated the very memory retrieval that such organizations were attempting to provoke: opening the archives would serve the 'symbolic legitimisation of the claims of the victims'.[49] Albeit couched within a more consensual framework of citizenship, such demands were not accepted. At this point (1991–6), governments of the left and right neither wanted to recognize the extent of the massacre, admit responsibility, nor even provide the archive resources to enable historians to explain and analyse this highly charged past. The institutional context was also important: in 1996–7, the Interior Minister was Jean-Michel Debré, the son of Prime Minister Michel Debré in 1961.

The French authorities probably feared that any recognition of the extent of and responsibilities for state violence would lead to calls for retributive justice.

[46] Mark Osiel, *Mass Atrocity, Collective Memory and the Law* (New Brunswick, NJ, and London: Transaction Publishers, 2000), 270.

[47] See Mehdi Lallaoui, 'Sétif, 8 mai 1945, le devoir de mémoire', *Libération* (8 May 1995).

[48] Jean-Luc Einaudi, untitled chapter in Assouline and Lallaoui, *À propos d'octobre 1961*, 58–63, 58.

[49] See Elizabeth Jelin and Susana G. Kaufman, 'Layers of Memories: Twenty Years After in Argentina', in T. G. Ashplant, Graham Dawson, and Michael Roper (eds.), *The Politics of War Memory and Commemoration* (London: Routledge, 2000), 92.

In 1988, Papon had issued a self-justificatory version of his time as Head of Police,[50] underlining his 'heroic' role in combating the FLN. However, by 1993 there were explicit calls for Papon to be brought to trial regarding the events of 17 October.[51] As the 1990s wore on, the aura of judicial impregnability Papon had managed to surround himself with for decades was slowly disappearing, as allegations concerning his involvement in the deportation of Jews from the Gironde (1942–4) culminated in the court decision in September 1995 that he should stand trial.[52] However, media attention understandably focused on Papon's Vichy past at this point. Nevertheless, in his speech to the annual commemorative gathering at Pont Saint-Michel in October 1994, MRAP president Mouloud Aounit had termed the events of 17 October a 'crime against humanity'.[53] In 1996, the Fondation du 8-Mai-1945 undertook to have Papon charged for crimes against humanity.[54] These attempts were also a legal subterfuge due to the amnesty legislation: there was no judicial 'space' for legal recourse.[55] Knowing this, ANM and MRAP demands centred more on truth: the best that could be hoped for was truth without justice.[56] Demands for truth were therefore, for the MRAP, 'a political and moral demand'[57] and envisaged as a form of justice in itself.

Demands for recognition and reparation in relation to 17 October therefore concentrated on the symbolic rather than judicial. As the authors of a study on the politics of memory have summarized: 'Truth telling is said to address the social need for knowledge to become acknowledgement'.[58] While the state, as the perpetrator of violence and its covering up, is the main addressee of such demands, the term 'acknowledgement', synonymous with recognition, also targets civil society. As MRAP president Mouloud Aounit stated: 'Symbolic reparation is necessary for what happened. What is needed is for everyone to share the memory of 17 October, for all victims to be recognized as such, and for this to be accepted by all sectors of society.'[59] This discourse was often framed within a demand for equality and the positive impact that truth and recognition could have on young people of post-colonial migrant origin: 'For us as French citizens it's necessary to be on equal memorial terms with others. If our history and that of our parents is not recognized, there cannot be equality and integration into French society.'[60]

[50] Papon, *Les Chevaux du pouvoir*, 159–231. For an analysis of this version, see Richard J. Golsan, 'Memory's *bombes à retardement*: Maurice Papon, Crimes against Humanity, and 17 October 1961', *Journal of European Studies*, 28/109–10 (Mar.–June 1998), 153–72, 167–9.

[51] MRAP flyer distributed at the 17 Oct. 1993 commemorations.

[52] Allegations relating to Papon's role during Vichy had emerged in 1981.

[53] The speech (6 pp., here p. 3) is reproduced in the annex of Virginie Chenal, *Le 17 octobre: l'oubli revisité*.

[54] *Le Monde* (17 Oct. 1996). The Fondation is based in Algeria.

[55] Branche, *La Torture*, 426.

[56] Alexandra Barahona de Brito, Carmen Gonzaléz-Enríquez, and Paloma Aguilar, 'Introduction', in their *The Politics of Memory: Transitional Justice in Democratizing Societies* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 20.

[57] Interviewed in *Le Monde* (17 Oct. 1996).

[58] Barahona de Brito et al., 'Introduction', 25.

[59] 'Sortir de l'oubli', *Différences*, 190 (Nov. 1997), 1.

[60] Mehdi Lallaoui in *Politis* (19–25 Sept. 1991).

While memory activists presented the need for official recognition of 17 October and other instances of colonial violence (e.g. Sétif, 1945) as a prerequisite for reconciliation, evoking these violent events was not supposed to revive sentiments of animosity. For Mehdi Lallaoui: 'these painful episodes, far from being a knife twisted in the wound' should enable discussion of the history of various peoples outside the framework of official French history: 'we think that a history that is shared and given value by all will contribute to respect for others and, in a certain way, to reconciliation between people on both sides of the Mediterranean'.[61] For ANM, the future lies in overcoming feelings of resentment, disaffection, and marginalization within post-colonial Algerian communities in relation to the French state precisely because of the official French denial or manipulation of the historical record.[62] The discourses of organizations such as ANM highlight the complex dialectic between state and civil society regarding colonial legacies. Memory activists also insist on the way in which the lack of truth and recognition of 17 October fuels contemporary racism. For MRAP president Mouloud Aounit: 'This collective amnesia is a powerful vector of current racism against Maghrebis, especially Algerians.'[63] The way in which campaigners represented 17 October therefore operated on two, linked, levels. First, as 'event', 17 October refers to what happened during 17–20 October 1961 in particular, and what was covered up and largely forgotten. Second, '17 October' has a wider symbolic meaning referring to violent, racially inspired or expressed colonial governance, the legacies of which continue today in terms of racism, denial of dignity, lack of state accountability, and certain policing methods.

Several factors arguably constituted the conditions of possibility for the emergence of such memorial discourses in the 1990s, all linked to a deep structural transformation in Western societies regarding the dialectic between past, present, and future within the politics of memory, and specifically in relation to suffering, victimhood, and the role of the state.[64] The politics of memory in operation here does not ignore the future, but insists that concerns in the present stem from painful legacies in the past, and that any future project for a fairer society has to be constructed on the basis of dealing with these legacies. For campaigners, the state should play a central role in such a dynamic, even more so in that, in the case of 17 October, it constituted the oppressor. In turn, the shifting ideological trajectories of left-wing campaigners who moved away from revolutionary agendas, led them to view the French state in less antagonistic terms, and as the guarantor of human rights. The wider role of the courts used to establish the historical record (*la judiciarisation de l'histoire*), linked to the Barbie and Touvier trials, constitutes one specific example of such transformations.[65] In addition, the notion that such

[61] 'Sétif, 8 mai 1945, le devoir de mémoire', *Libération* (8 May 1995).
[62] Thénault, 'La Manifestation des Algériens', 128.
[63] *Le Monde* (17 Oct. 1996), article '17 octobre 1961'.
[64] See Jean-Michel Chaumont, *La Concurrence des victimes: Génocide, identité, reconnaissance* (Paris: La Découverte, 1997).
[65] See Rousso, *La Hantise du passé*; Osiel, *Mass Atrocity*.

court cases can play an important pedagogical role, and act as vectors of memory within a logic of the 'duty to remember' due to the centrality of Holocaust memory, has now extended well beyond that area.[66] The examples of democratization in Argentina, Chile, and elsewhere provided added impetus, reinforcing the international human rights framework and seeing the emergence of new fora of symbolic justice.[67] As Benjamin Stora has shown, many of these factors operated on a general level to favour the 'return' of the memories of the Algerian War.[68]

How did the Republican framework inform the production, articulation, and levels of acceptability of such discourses, specifically in relation to 17 October? Campaigners such as ANM and MRAP argued that state recognition of violent colonial governance would facilitate the integration of Algerian communities in France.[69] While this might appear an adoption of the consensual discourse on 'integration', it arguably marks a limited departure from the traditional conception of the term, understood here as closely linked to 'assimilation'. In this instance, the onus moves from that of the individuals who must integrate (dominant discourse) to the need for governments to create the symbolic conditions whereby those of Algerian heritage would want to integrate. Furthermore, campaigners present the need for equality and a refusal of cultural assimilation as the prerequisite for such integration. These political discourses articulate established concepts of Republican political culture (equality, justice, integration, citizenship) while seeking to rework them via themes that may appeal most strongly to racialized and/or immigrant-based groups, but which also have a wider resonance (anti-racism, dignity, solidarity).[70] This memory activism therefore criticizes the Republican historical narrative that passes over the history of colonial violence and the history of immigration, while also invoking key elements of Republican political culture. Mobilization may take the form of an appeal to symbolic ethnicity such as *algérianité* (Algerianness) but wider themes ensure it is not ethnically specific.[71] Such memory activism arguably resembles what Mireille Rosello calls a 'tactical universalism', a strategic choice of articulating demands within more consensual political discourses, given the highly limited openness to multicultural claims within the French polity.[72]

How effective was such campaigning beyond the sphere of demands to government? Some analysts question whether memory activism managed to find

[66] See Osiel, *Mass Atrocity*, 18, and Kattan, *Le Devoir de mémoire*.

[67] See Lefranc, *Politiques du pardon*; Torpey, *Politics and the Past*.

[68] Stora, 'La Mémoire retrouvée'.

[69] See Mouloud Aounit, '17 octobre 1961', in *Le Monde* (17 Oct. 1996).

[70] On this, see Chenal, *Le 17 octobre 1961: l'oubli revisité*, 21.

[71] Vincent Geisser, *Ethnicité républicaine: Les Élites d'origine maghrébine dans le système politique français* (Paris: Presses de Sciences-Po, 1997), 187; Catherine Wihtol de Wenden and Rémy Leveau, *La Beurgeoisie: Les Trois Âges de la vie associative issue de l'immigration* (Paris: CNRS Éditions, 2001), 118.

[72] Mireille Rosello, 'Tactical Universalism and New Multiculturalist Claims', in Charles Forsdick and David Murphy (eds.), *Francophone Postcolonial Studies: A Critical Introduction* (London: Arnold, 2003).

any relays at local level, since the role of leading memory activists as 'cultural intermediaries' may have left them cut off from grass-roots campaigning.[73] Just as in the period 1983–4, in the early 1990s older activists realized that memory transmission within Algerian migrant communities was not operating well. Teenagers of the 1990s, the next 'micro-generation' of descendants of Algerian migrants, appeared unaware of their parents' trajectories. Here, we see the complexity of memorial dynamics regarding 17 October in the 1990s. The descendants of the former demonstrators, and their supporters, represent the memories of former demonstrators in two ways: both speaking 'for', in place of parents (and younger siblings), and speaking after the event, in a different context, thus producing a complicated generational layering of memorial voices.[74]

There are nonetheless signs that the increased visibility of 17 October in the French media was starting to have some impact at national level. In 1993, the first detailed survey relating to the memories of the Algerian War appeared. Alain Coulon found that 55 per cent of respondents between the ages of 17 and 30 knew about the repression on 17 October, as opposed to 77 per cent for Charonne, showing the continuing disparity between the two events, but nonetheless a surprising awareness of 17 October.[75] Just as 17 October was emerging from the shadow of Charonne, it was starting to figure as a key date in France when journalists and academics evoked the war.

The 1991 commemorations, and the following year's thirtieth anniversary of the end of the war, provided an important focus of memory work. As Elizabeth Jelin and Susana G. Kaufman have remarked, speaking about campaigns for truth and justice in Argentina by families of victims of state persecution, no commemoration—in particular, the key ones each decade—opens up the same debates as previously, nor in the same way. There may be new participants in relation to the previous commemorations: 'Facts are reorganized, existing perspectives and schemes of interpretation are shaken, voices of new and old generations ask questions, tell stories, create spaces for interaction, share clues about what they experienced, what they heard, what they silenced before.'[76] In October 1992, Mehdi Lallaoui explained the effects of the previous year's activities: 'some people who had kept silent for thirty years—including some police officers—have finally dared to speak. Since last year, we have received a huge amount of letters and testimonies.'[77]

Indeed, with this growth of public interest—albeit, beyond the experiential group, still mostly restricted to campaigning groups, journalists, and researchers—different contexts emerged in which to speak more freely about 17 October. We

[73] Wihtol de Wenden and Leveau, *La Beurgeoisie*, 88–106.

[74] See Jelin and Kaufman, 'Layers of Memories'.

[75] Alain Coulon, *Connaissance de la Guerre d'Algérie: Trente ans après. Enquête auprès des jeunes Français de 17 à 30 ans* (Saint-Denis: Laboratoire de recherche ethnométhodologique, Université de Paris-VII, 1993) 17.

[76] Jelin and Kaufman, 'Layers of Memories', 96.

[77] *Libération* (17 Oct. 1992).

saw in the previous chapter how vital such contexts are to stimulate memory and provide a 'space' or forum for public transmission. The growth in public visibility of 17 October encouraged the public emergence of memories previously kept silent or within the family sphere. Conversely, greater public evocations of the Algerian War, and those concerning 17 October in particular, brought children of Algerian parents to question them about their wartime experiences within a process that sought to valorize their parents' histories, showing an 'interdependence' between the generations regarding the memories of October 1961.[78] Algerian former demonstrators could experience requests to contribute as a sign of recognition, respect, and standing, thereby regaining a sense of honour that they may have felt French society had denied them.[79]

The two documentaries on 17 October produced in the early 1990s, *Le Silence du fleuve* (The River's Silence, 1991) and *Une journée portée disparue* (Drowning by Bullets, 1992), are emblematic of this process.[80] The films show the mixture of truth work and memory work campaigners undertook at this point. As Marguerite Feitlowitz has shown, public testimony may serve several functions: in the first instance, it may involve amassing evidence for a trial—or, more generally, to prove to disbelievers what happened.[81] As part of a multi-vocal counter-narrative involving victims of violence plus deliberate or accidental witnesses, testimony as counter-knowledge here challenges the state and/or perpetrator version of events and the sense of justice and legitimacy with which state actors attempt to surround themselves.[82] Both documentary films worked to establish a more accurate historical record, questioning the official French version and situating the violence of October 1961 within a war context. Interviews with Algerian women participants on 17 October underlined the violence women had faced, an aspect of 17 October that had hitherto attracted little attention. Former police officers, some of whom were speaking out on camera for the first time, detailed the frenzy of police violence on 17 October.

In terms of memory work, the films sought to contribute to the visibility and memory recovery of 17 October, and, in doing so, to respond to the questions that many French people asked when they discovered the killings: how could such violence have been covered up? Why had French civil society not reacted? In addition, the interview format allowed former participants to express their subjective experience, albeit a considerably retrospective one given the elapse of thirty years: yet the vividness of detail shows how firmly etched in individual memory the demonstration and its aftermath remained for many participants or observers. The two films also showed the plurality of memories of the same event, the links

[78] Anne Donadey, *Recasting Postcolonialism: Women Writing between Worlds* (Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann, 2001), 32.

[79] See Wieviorka, *L'Ère du témoin*, 160–3.

[80] See General Introduction.

[81] Marguerite Feitlowitz, *A Lexicon of Terror: Argentina and the Legacies of Torture* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), 16.

[82] Karen Slawner, 'Interpreting Victim Testimony: Survivor Discourse and the Narration of History', article available at *http://www.yendor.com/vanished/index.html* (accessed 14 Apr. 2004).

between individual and social memory, and between personal and public silence, as well as the desire for participants of 17 October to transmit the memory of repression as they approached retirement.

However, if the visibility of 17 October was slowly emerging from previous occultation, and the organizations promoting its memory were less fragmented in the 1990s than previously, other, competing memorial initiatives relating to groups feeling aggrieved by their wartime experiences ensured that 17 October was but one theme amongst many others. The early 1990s saw many former French conscript soldiers break their previous silence regarding their experiences in Algeria and, in some cases, the illegal violence they had witnessed and/or practised there.[83] Television series such as *Les Années algériennes* (The Algerian Years, 1991), and Bertrand Tavernier's documentary *La Guerre sans nom* (The War without a Name, 1992) sought out individual soldier testimony.[84] With the *harkis*, a similar pattern emerges to that in relation to 17 October, with demands for both a more accurate version of the historical record, symbolic recognition from France and Algeria, and—in the case of the *harkis*—financial indemnities. Stuck between official French silence and Algerian demonization, *harki* grievances had to wait until the 1990s to start to be heard, their demands carried more strongly by their descendants.[85] However, the most powerful and well-structured group to have emerged from the war, the *pieds-noirs*, themselves seeking indemnities and recognition from the French state, largely overshadowed these groups.[86] Thus what emerged into the public sphere from the private sphere were competing, at times conflicting memories, with a significant imbalance in the ability of some groups to be heard over others.[87]

ALGERIA (1980–1997): A LIMITED PLURALISM

During the same period, the content and contours of war memories in Algeria were also undergoing transformation. The first key event was the arrival in power of Boumediene's successor, Chadli Bendjedid, in 1979. To counteract his predecessor's socialism, Chadli, the military's candidate, appeased the growing radical Islamism.[88] For example, in June 1984, the Family Code limited women's rights in many domains. Chadli ruthlessly put down the 'Berber Spring' protest movement of 1980 that partly arose due to his support for greater Arabization. In the

[83] Mauss-Copeaux, *Appelés en Algérie*.

[84] See Fleury-Vilatte, *La Mémoire télévisuelle*, 169–73.

[85] Stéphanie Abrial, *Les Enfants de harkis: De la révolte à l'intégration* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 2002). Since the late 1990s, the *harkis* have found powerful supporters in right-wing military and *pied-noir* circles who have used the French state abandonment of *harkis* in 1962 to criticize the moderate right and left.

[86] Clarisse Buono, *Pieds-noirs de père en fils*.

[87] Stora, 'La Mémoire retrouvée'.

[88] Hugh Roberts, *The Battlefield: Algeria 1988–2002. Studies in a Broken Polity* (London: Verso, 2003), esp. ch. 1.

medium term, this repression led to the further questioning of FLN orthodoxy.[89] Unsurprisingly, this increasing political and social instability affected representations of the Algerian War. Aware that, with time, some war veterans were dying, the regime sought to record the testimonies of independence veterans. Previously unheard of militants attained public visibility, but still within an overarching narrative of the 'heroic people'.[90] While the state continued to exert control on historical production, and the media, there was a slight opening out towards other strands of Algerian nationalism previously excluded from official versions. Omar Carlier says that this increasing pluralism signified that 'the consensus on the very foundations of the political system [*i.e. the FLN*] was crumbling'.[91] Former veterans of the Fédération de France (FF-FLN), in Daho Djerbal's words, sought to set the historical record straight regarding the role of the French Federation, feeling they were 'victims of a conspiracy of silence and had been ostracized'.[92] In this vein, Ali Haroun's book *La 7è Wilaya* (1986) wanted to underline the role of the FF-FLN and hence compensate for the Federation's post-1962 marginalization.[93]

How did such developments in Algeria impact in France? We saw that under Boumediene, the Amicale invoked 17 October from a top–down perspective to construct a 'we' defined as the valiant people shaking off the colonialist yoke. In this respect, few changes occurred: the official October commemorations still sought to portray a united Algerian migrant community in Paris mobilizing in favour of the FLN.[94] The Amicale's publication denied any marginalization of 17 October on the Algerian side.[95] There were calls for 17 October and Charonne to be distinct, in the sense that Charonne obfuscated 17 October.[96] Amicale publications increasingly gave voice to ordinary militants, in particular those who had suffered violence in 1961.[97]

However, by the mid-1980s, as we have seen, the Amicale, which had previously enjoyed a virtual monopoly on commemorative initiatives in France, was increasingly in competition with other commemorations and representations of 17 October.[98] This may well explain the high visibility it gave the 1986 commemorations, which remained marginal to the concerns of the French anti-racist left. The Amicale's message was generally conciliatory and eschewed any deep resentment toward the French, although diplomatic relations between Algerian and France remained subject to periods of tension.[99] The Amicale particularly targeted the

[89] Stora, *La Gangrène*, 236–7. [90] Ibid. 302–5 *et passim*.

[91] Omar Carlier, 'Mémoire, mythe et doxa de l'État en Algérie: L'Étoile nord-africaine et la religion du *Watan*', *Vingtième siècle: Revue d'histoire*, 30 (Apr.–June 1991), 82–91, 88.

[92] Daho Djerbal, 'La Guerre d'Algérie au miroir des écritures: Texte écrit et texte oral', in Pathé and Lefeuvre, *La Guerre d'Algérie au miroir des décolonisations françaises*, 533.

[93] Cole, 'Remembering the Battle of Paris', 33–4.

[94] *Actualité de l'émigration*, 13 (16 Oct. 1985), 1.

[95] Hedy Hamel, 'Par le feu et par le sang', *L'Algérien en France*, 325 (17 Oct. 1980), 20–1.

[96] *Actualité de l'émigration*, 13 (16 Oct. 1985), 19.

[97] See *Actualité de l'émigration*, 13 (16 Oct. 1985), 28–33.

[98] See the critique of SOS-Racisme in *La Semaine de l'émigration*, 124 (20 Mar. 1985), 6.

[99] Rosoux, *Les Usages de la mémoire*, 116–37.

descendants of Algerian migrants who were increasingly viewing the Amicale as unrepresentative. While the Amicale recognized by the mid-1980s that young people of Algerian heritage in France would probably remain there,[100] it also looked to remind them of their historical roots, adapting its discourse to suit this purpose. To mark the twenty-fifth anniversary of 17 October, an editorial in the Amicale's publication stated that this new generation 'inherited 17 October 1961 in two respects: this generation carries with it the stigma of racist, colonial violence which had free rein that day and which continues to kill, marginalize and imply inferiority. This generation also carries the huge desire for dignity and freedom that led the Algerian community of Paris into the lion's den of the colonizer.'[101] In the same publication, Abdelkader Djeghloul, in an article entitled 'For a convivial memory', also insisted on the dual historical roots—in Algeria and France—of the descendants of Algerian migrants.[102] For the 1986 commemoration, the Amicale produced a lengthy publication on 17 October, containing analyses, testimonies, and literary and iconographic representations of the repression. The editorial that introduces the collection talks of a 'convivial', 'fertile', or 'solidaristic' memory devoid of any 'spirit of revenge', with 17 October and Charonne closely associated.[103]

However, the repression in Algiers in October 1988 hastened the Amicale's decline, just as it bolstered opposition to the FLN in France. Social unrest that had already marked the mid-1980s and been violently repressed, erupted into wide-scale violence in October 1988, as Algeria's weak economy placed further strain on the country's inhabitants who saw the elite continue to profit while their own socio-economic situation worsened.[104] In the first ten days of October, security forces killed around 500 protestors in Algiers, Oran, Annaba, Mostaganem, and Blida, protestors often attacking symbols of FLN wealth and influence. In some instances, the police fired on unarmed protestors with automatic weapons. Many detained protestors were tortured.

Commonly termed 'Black October', these events 'finally demolished the myth of the military as the honourable guarantor of the revolution'.[105] In recent Algerian history, 1988 acts as an important cut-off point. It often symbolizes the transition towards greater pluralism, given the concessions Chadli conceded in its wake (see below). Contestation—crucially, radical Islamism—grew, as the press and political parties gained freedoms, as did independent research on the war.[106] With greater hindsight, October 1988 appears as the point after which Algeria moved into political crisis, as the FLN no longer acted as a bulwark to the power of the military.[107] At the time, however, commentators often analysed security force violence in October 1988 in relation to French colonial violence that viewed

[100] See Geisser, *Ethnicité républicaine*, 46, 107–8.
[101] *Actualité de l'émigration*, 59 (15 Oct. 1986), 2. [102] Ibid. 11.
[103] *Actualité de l'émigration, 17 octobre 1961: 'Mémoire d'une communauté'*, 3, 5.
[104] Ruedy, *Modern Algeria*, 248–50. [105] Stone, *The Agony of Algeria*, 66.
[106] See Benjamin Stora, 'Algérie: Les Retours de la mémoire de la guerre d'indépendance', *Modern and Contemporary France*, 10/4 (2002), 461–73. [107] Roberts, *The Battlefield*, 252–4.

Algerians' lives as easily expendable. The major distinction from the pre-1962 period was naturally that here the Algerian state was repressing its own people, and it was impossible to blame an occupying military power.[108]

In France, reactions to the October 1988 repression amongst young people of Algerian heritage, and the Algerian opposition in the diaspora, drew more parallels with 17 October than those of, for example, December 1960. This revealed the particular historical consciousness forged in France that had developed in relation to 17 October by this point amongst some sections of the Algerian migrant communities. This historical consciousness therefore remained attached to Algeria but none the less refracted and interpreted that attachment through the memory of wartime events in France, within which the memories of 17 October occupied a key place. Former anti-colonial and anti-war activists in France combined with Radio-Beur to produce an analysis of the events and their significance, deliberately entitled *Octobre à Alger* with reference to Panijel's film *Octobre à Paris*.[109] The book, prefaced by Pierre Vidal-Naquet, highlighted that injured demonstrators in October 1988 had been too scared to seek hospital treatment, and that the Algerian state had tried to minimize death figures.[110]

For Vincent Geisser, the repression provoked a 'fundamental break' between the Algerian state and young people of Algerian heritage in France.[111] For the political opposition to Chadli, it was the proof of the ruthlessness of the FLN and the emptiness of the regime's attempts to ground its legitimacy in a narrative of national liberation. The October 1988 commemorations of 17 October were the occasion for some Algerians to express their opposition to the Algiers regime via a link between the two events. Indeed, for Khaled Benaïssa, who had heretofore kept silent about his experiences on 17 October 1961 at the Pont de Neuilly, the October 1988 repression was the key trigger leading him to speak of his memories of 1961 within an association called Solidarité avec le peuple algérien (Solidarity with the Algerian People) that linked demands for equality and justice in France and Algeria.[112]

Embarrassed and embattled, the Amicale went on the offensive, publishing a statement on October 1988 that attempted to deflect attention from the very recent repression in Algiers: 'so many voices are coming forward this month to criticize Algeria after the recent riots in Algiers; but no voices are forthcoming to recall 17 October 1961, even less to show the images of the ferocious repression, especially during the period 1954 to 1962'.[113] As Joshua Cole has noted, the visibility given the annual October commemorations was far less than the usually substantial coverage in the Amicale's publication.[114] We see again how the key

[108] See the article by Abdelkader Djeghloul, 'Aux victimes d'octobre 1988', *Le Siècle* (13–19 Oct. 1999).
[109] Vidal-Naquet, *Mémoires 2*, 355.
[110] Abdel Aïssou (coord.), *Octobre à Alger* (Paris: Seuil, 1988), 48.
[111] Geisser, *Ethnicité républicaine*, 106.
[112] Interview (J.H.), Aubervilliers, 15 Oct. 2002. See also Ch. 10.
[113] *Actualité de l'émigration*, 147 (19–26 Oct. 1988), 40.
[114] Cole, 'Remembering the Battle of Paris', 35.

dates and 'stages' in the emergence of the memories of 17 October in the public sphere will not necessarily be the same for French and Algerian people, just as different dates symbolize and signify differently according to nationality, politics, location, and trajectory. In this instance, and contrary to previous articulations of the memories of 17 October, events in Algeria rather than France stimulated public evocations in France of the October 1961 repression.

After 1988, the more liberal framework for political expression meant that the FLN was no longer the sole party, although some parties remained more equal than others. The 1989 constitution that Chadli introduced encouraged the development of the flourishing post-1989 Kabyle diaspora politics in France that evolved in a highly ambivalent relationship to the Algerian state and its wartime legacies.[115] The post-1988 period saw a weakening of previous FLN hegemony over how Algerians studied and portrayed the war. In October 1991, Ali Haroun was Minister for Human Rights under Sid Ahmed Ghozali's government. The combination of the impact of October 1988 and Haroun's presence in government no doubt led to a more conducive political framework in which commemorations could be held. Such initiatives also partially stemmed from the greater visibility in France of 17 October. The Algerian government declared 17 October a 'National day of remembrance'.[116] *El Moudjahid*, the official newspaper, headlined with 17 October, an event that Mouloud Kassim Naït Belkacem described as having brought the resumption of negotiations between the GPRA and the French government, therefore equating it in significance with the December 1960 demonstrations.[117]

However, the 1991 commemorations of 17 October showed that the key structuring tensions inherited from the war were still far from resolved. The veterans' association for former FF-FLN activists (Association des Moudjahidîn de la Fédération de France) had only come into existence in 1990, providing a structure at regional level in Algeria to organize commemorative events, and cultivate wartime contacts.[118] The film *Le Silence du fleuve* appeared on state television, although in the subsequent live debate, Mohammed Harbi was not allowed to discuss the marginalization of the FF-FLN in Algeria.[119] Algerian women complained that the presence of women demonstrators on 17 October showed their attachment to freedom, whereas legal restrictions limited their citizenship and agency in 1991.[120] Einaudi's first book, *La Bataille de Paris*, remained unavailable in Algerian bookshops in 1993.[121] Not unlike in France, albeit for different reasons, greater press and academic freedoms in Algeria—themselves still highly relative—therefore simply underlined tensions and contradictions that had previously been hidden

[115] See Paul A. Silverstein, 'Martyrs and Patriots: Ethnic, National and Transnational Dimensions of Kabyle Politics', in James McDougall (ed.), *Nation, Society and Culture in North Africa* (London: Frank Cass, 2003).
[116] See *El Moudjahid* (7 Oct. 1991), 3.
[117] *El Moudjahid* (17 Oct. 1991), 2.
[118] See *El Moudjahid* (10 Oct. 1991).
[119] See Hassan Formid, '17 octobre 1961 : Alger fait taire le débat', *Libération* (21 Oct. 1991).
[120] See Georges Marion's article 'A Alger, un recueillement douloureux', *Le Monde* (19 Oct. 1991).
[121] Manceron and Remaoun, *D'une rive à l'autre*, 262.

from the public political stage, rather than bringing any resolution to competing narratives of the past.

Indeed, political priorities in Algeria then centred on internal affairs due to the focus on the terrible violence that broke out after 1992. Fearful of the likely electoral victory of the Islamic Salvation Front, which had campaigned as the true heir of the independence struggle and presented a corrupt military apparatus and the 'decadent' Francophone elite (termed *Hizb faransa* or 'the party of France') as having betrayed the Revolution, the army intervened to force cancellation of the second round of parliamentary elections. This prompted elements of the radical Islamist movement to resort to violence that was more systematic. The Algerian military, supported by some secularist groups, countered the radical Islamists through torture, assassination, and terror in an attempt to 'eradicate' their opponents.

Often termed—in both Algeria and France—a 'second Algerian War', the mobilization of this referent hid often diametrically opposed and competing historical representations.[122] Some, highly dubious, analyses of this phenomenon used the 'repetition' of violence to stress the inherent violence of Algerian society (and, by inference, of Algerians themselves). This was an obvious continuation and readaptation of colonialist discourses. Yet some limited parallels with the 1954–62 war appear founded. For example, the political rhetoric mobilized, and the forms of violence and their spatial distribution in Algeria, did indeed bear certain similarities with 1954–62, showing the lasting relevance of the invocation of nationalist frames of reference within Algerian politics and society both at national and highly localized levels.[123] In the context of intra-Algerian violence, the FLN's use of violence during the Algerian War came under greater critical examination than previously.[124] However, these debates, for understandable reasons, centred on Algeria and not the war in France. Thus while references to the war returned, the repression in Paris in 1961 did not feature largely as the focus was elsewhere, although reminders of violent French colonial governance could provide a welcome smokescreen for the Algiers regime. By 1997, as Algeria began to enjoy greater political stability, the limited momentum generated in both France and Algeria in 1991 relating to 17 October appeared to have come to a standstill.

CONCLUSION

As Elizabeth Jelin and Susana G. Kaufman have remarked, for memory transmission to take place, we need 'good transmitters, but also open receptors' that recognize the past—and the modalities through which it is represented—as meaningful.[125]

[122] See Roberts, *Algeria: The Battlefield*, and Benjamin Stora, *La Guerre invisible: Algérie, années 90* (Paris: Presses de Sciences-Po, 2001).

[123] Benjamin Stora, 'Deuxième guerre d'Algérie? Les Habits anciens des combattants', *Les Temps modernes*, 580 (Jan.–Feb. 1995), 242–61.

[124] Manceron and Remaoun, *D'une rive à l'autre*, 152–4.

[125] Jelin and Kaufman, 'Layers of Memory', 106.

This process was slowly under way during the 1990s, but lacked institutional relays in France, and frameworks of memory at national level in which to 'ground' the memory of 17 October within references to colonialism, colonial violence, or migrant trajectories. This condemned the no doubt more regular evocations of 17 October in political and media debate to repetition with no lasting influence or 'hold' on large sectors of French society outside post-colonial migrant communities and the left.[126] In these latter groups, there was a widening of these memories, mixing experiential, transmitted, and acquired memories, just as the reframing of 17 October within discourses of anti-racism and, later, demands for symbolic justice, gave voice to the memories of participants in the 17 October events. Media visibility does not therefore necessarily make for shared memory: 17 October was a highly contested event in a highly contested war, the war itself rarely framed within a wider colonial history.[127] However, Chapter 12 shows how the Papon trial and its effects led to the politics of memory relating to 17 October becoming central to discussion of the Algerian War in France, and providing a platform for the emergence of memorial voices often silent for decades.

[126] Gaïti, 'Les Ratés de l'histoire', 34.
[127] See Raphaëlle Branche, *La Guerre d'Algérie: Une histoire apaisée?* (Paris: Seuil, 2005).

12

Ever-Present Memories?

This final chapter examines how and why the politics of memory regarding 17 October occupied a central place in media and political debate in France between 1997 and 2001, and assesses the impact of such debates on the memorial dynamics within the Algerian migrant communities in particular. It also reflects upon the relevance of the 17 October events to a deeper understanding of colonial and post-colonial power relations.

BETWEEN COURTROOM AND ARCHIVE: JUSTICE, MEMORY, AND HISTORY, 1997–2000

Papon's long-awaited trial for complicity in the deportation of Jewish people from the Bordeaux region during his time as secretary-general of the Bordeaux Prefecture (July 1942–January 1944)[1] represented an ideal opportunity for campaigners to propel the October 1961 violence further onto the national but also international media stage. In the context of a right-wing government (1993 to 1997) and, after 1995, a Gaullist president in Jacques Chirac, the institutional context had been unfavourable to memory activism. However, by the time Papon's trial opened in Bordeaux in October 1997, the left had returned to power under Lionel Jospin, in charge of a coalition government of Socialists, Communists, and Greens, and François Mitterrand's death in 1996 had removed some potential obstacles to greater openness on the left. As previously, campaigners' main demands focused around the need for official recognition and the opening of the archives. Au nom de la mémoire (ANM) and the MRAP thus took advantage of the reappraisal of the Vichy legacy to introduce Papon's subsequent role during the Algerian War, centring on 17 October. This tactic was termed 'the trial within a trial' by Papon's defence lawyer Jean-Marc Varaut.[2]

The controversy that surrounded the trial itself therefore extended to cover the repression in Paris in 1961.[3] Conceding that the number of Algerian deaths was between fifteen and twenty during 17–20 October and therefore higher than the

[1] See in general Richard J. Golsan, 'Introduction: Maurice Papon and Crimes against Humanities in France', in Golsan, *The Papon Affair*.

[2] *Le Procès*, i. 240.

[3] See R. J. Golsan, 'Memory's *bombes à retardement*'.

official total of two (or six) given at the time, Papon blamed these deaths on MNA/FLN rivalry rather than the police. Papon stated that 'none of the bodies removed from the Seine can be attributed to officers from the Préfecture de Police'.[4] The civil litigants' lawyers appeared unaware of Papon's role in violent repression as IGAME in Algeria that the court also evoked, and were not well read on the Paris repression either: consequently, their questioning was not probing. The following day, Jean-Luc Einaudi, called as a witness by several of the civil litigants, was able to contradict many of Papon's earlier declarations.[5] However, these two very different versions presented to the court reinforced Éric Conan's argument (with that of Henry Rousso) that courts can be problematical sites for the establishment of historical truth, since they often stage merely competing versions of the truth.[6] If, for campaigners, one of the aims of the 'trial within a trial' was to show that Papon was not a credible witness, this tactic only partially succeeded inside the courtroom.

Outside the courtroom, revelations regarding the number of Algerian deaths during October 1961, details of which ANM activist David Assouline obtained from the legal archives held at the Archives de Paris, aimed to complement the campaign by further suggesting Papon was an unreliable witness.[7] *Libération* then published photographs of these documents on 22 October 1997. These archives gave details of Algerians into whose deaths there had been 'investigations' in October–November 1961. The ninety names of deceased Algerians that these legal registers contained for the second half of October 1961 suggested that Papon's revised version of fifteen–twenty deaths remained a gross underestimate. However, campaigners failed to clarify the precise link between the numbers of Algerian dead in these judicial records and the 17–20 October repression itself. In addition, Henry Rousso's fear that the trial over-personalized the 17 October repression appears founded.[8] Papon—as Papon himself was keen to point out—had been following the Gaullist government's orders to repress the demonstration, and understanding the 17 October events necessitates an examination of political as well as personal responsibilities, as Part I showed.

Alongside what might be termed the judicial dynamics of the trial, a memorial dynamic sought to link the suffering of the sons and daughters of those Jewish people deported from the Gironde to that of relatives of Algerians who had suffered from police violence in October 1961. In his summing up at the Papon trial, Gérard Boulanger, one of the lawyers for the civil litigants, stated that

[4] See *Le Procès*, i. 198–203, for Papon's deposition, here 199.

[5] Ibid. i. 225–44. See also *Libération* (18–19 Oct. 1997), 'Le Procès Papon rouvre les blessures d'octobre 1961'.

[6] Éric Conan and Henry Rousso, *Vichy, un passé qui ne passe pas* (Paris: Fayard, 1994). See also Éric Conan, *Le Procès Papon, un journal d'audience* (Paris: Gallimard, 1998).

[7] Assouline was in fact acting on the spirit of declarations made earlier that week by key figures such as Lionel Jospin, Interior Minister Jean-Pierre Chevènement, and Culture Minister Catherine Trautmann who had expressed an openness to accord greater archival access.

[8] Rousso, *La Hantise du passé*, 121.

Einaudi's deposition constituted 'a Republican symbol—the sons and daughters of the Jewish victims allowing the Arab sons and daughters of the October 1961 *ratonnades* to speak. This gesture showed solidarity amongst those that had suffered.'[9] The role of descendants of Algerian demonstrators on 17 October in the mounting of this campaign echoes the lengthy efforts by the daughters and sons of those deported during Vichy to seek justice.

What were the key outcomes of the trial? On 2 April 1998, the court found Papon guilty of 'illegal arrest' and 'arbitrary detainment' (but not of 'complicity in the murder') of Jews deported from the Gironde, and sentenced him to ten years' imprisonment, suspended pending appeal. The highly controversial 'trial within a trial', with its problematical blending of historical, judicial, and memorial concerns, had brought significant media attention on 17 October and forced an apparent shift in official position on the archives, while leaving unresolved the question of the number of dead, or official recognition. The need to establish a reliable historical account of what had occurred in October 1961 gained further prominence, campaigners promoting the need for 'truth' as opposed to demanding 'justice'.[10] Because of the trial, media debates on 17 October henceforth competed with if not overshadowed the Papon–Vichy link.

Having 17 October discussed at the Bordeaux trial could only put more pressure on Papon and the authorities. The Mandelkern Report, that Interior Minister Jean-Pierre Chevènement had commissioned in October 1997 on the archives relating to 17 October 1961 in the Interior Ministry, was released covertly to the press without general publication in early May 1998,[11] and entered into the highly polemical debates regarding the numbers of Algerian dead.[12] The report spoke of 'very harsh repression',[13] and evoked the figure of several dozen Algerian deaths at least, thus going further than any other previous official publication. Campaigners used this finding to underline the falseness of official figures given in October 1961, strengthening their case that the term 'massacre' was justified.[14] However, the report implicitly took Einaudi and others to task for speaking of several hundred Algerian deaths.[15] Campaigners and some historians suggested that the Mandelkern Report risked installing a 'new official truth' regarding the numbers killed that was less implausible than the original figures but that remained an underestimate.[16] The report also reproduced the highly questionable police version, speaking of 'clashes' between police and demonstrators, and mentioning

[9] *Le Procès*, ii. 661.

[10] Sylvie Thénault, 'Le 17 octobre en question', *Jean Jaurès Cahiers trimestriels*, 148 (July–Sept. 1998), 89–104, 89.

[11] See *Le Figaro* (4 May 1998).

[12] Mandelkern Report, 6 Jan. 1998. See *L'Humanité*, *Libération*, and *Le Monde* (5 May 1998).

[13] Mandelkern Report, 17.

[14] David Assouline, untitled chapter in Assouline and Lallaoui, *À propos d'octobre*, here 31–2, 38.

[15] Mandelkern Report, 17.

[16] See D. Assouline in Assouline and Lallaoui, *À propos d'octobre*, 38; see also Claude Liauzu, 'Le 17 octobre 1961: Guerres de mémoires, archives réservées et questions d'histoire', *Cahiers d'histoire immédiate*, 15 (Spring 1999), 11–24.

'the exchange of gunfire', incorrectly suggesting reciprocal violence between police and demonstrators on 17 October.[17] It was Einaudi's angry response to this report that led Papon to sue him for libel, after Einaudi had claimed that a 'massacre' had been carried out in Paris 'under Maurice Papon's orders', to underline the Prefect's responsibility, a question that the Mandelkern Report had not addressed.[18]

One cannot insist too heavily on the intense irony of Maurice Papon's libel trial against Jean-Luc Einaudi in February 1999. As Henry Rousso has pointed out, justice—in the form of trials—constituted one if not *the* key vector of memory regarding Vichy. Such trials only came about due to the pressure from within civil society to force public action for justice, but also truth (both historical and judicial).[19] In the libel trial, on the other hand, Papon brought legal action against his 'accuser' Einaudi for alleging Papon's active agency in the repression, Einaudi having written of 'a massacre in Paris carried out by the police acting under the orders of Maurice Papon.'[20] However, Papon as accuser ultimately found himself in the role of the accused, and inadvertently provided another judicial and media stage before which to challenge the police version of events in October 1961 and highlight the refusal to grant archival access.[21] The civil courts thus played a role that the state had abdicated.

To be cleared, Einaudi had to show that the conclusions to his incriminated article had been made out of 'good faith'.[22] The authorities still denied Einaudi access to the very police and judicial archives that he might have used to prepare and support his case.[23] Einaudi's defence coordinated a wide range of written and oral testimony, from that of Algerians brutalized on the demonstration to that of French anti-colonial activists and police and army conscript whistle-blowers. Many key actors therefore reconvened political battles left in abeyance since 1961. One of the Algerian witnesses for the defence, Cherhabil Hachemi, described his experiences of violence in 'the world of darkness' of the detention centres where he was held after 17 October. Ahcène Boulanouar described being thrown into the Seine by police.[24] No Algerian had previously spoken before a court in France to provide testimony on the violence of 17 October. Papon and his main witnesses (Pierre Messmer, Pierre Somveille, Raymond Montaner) stuck to their usual line of suggesting that Papon had been following the orders of his political superiors. For Papon, the curfew and other police measures were only a police response to FLN violence: what police violence did occur was regrettable but minimal in its serious forms.[25]

This time, however, the court did not follow Papon. Speaking to the trial on 12 February 1999, the state prosecutor Vincent Lesclous used the term 'massacre',

[17] Mandelkern Report, 6.
[18] 'Octobre 1961: Pour la vérité, enfin', *Le Monde* (20 May 1998).
[19] Henry Rousso, 'Justice, History and Memory in France', in Torpey, *Politics and the Past*, 284–6.
[20] *Le Monde* (20 May 1998).
[21] See Jean-Luc Einaudi, 'Monsieur Papon ne me fera pas taire', *Le Monde* (2 Feb. 1999).
[22] See Einaudi, *Octobre 1961*, 42–57.
[23] See *Le Monde* (5 Feb. 1999).
[24] See *Libération* (12 Feb. 1999).
[25] See *Libération* (6 Feb.) and *Le Monde* (7–8 Feb. 1999).

describing the 17 October repression as 'a major injustice' in which the police had been 'in the grip of blinding hatred'. However, Lesclous did not accept Papon's active (as opposed to passive) agency in the repression and demanded Einaudi's symbolic condemnation on that basis.[26] The court's verdict of 26 March 1999 threw out the case. Talking of the 'considerable number' of victims and the 'extreme violence' used by police, it said that the witness statements had been sufficiently consistent to indicate that Einaudi's conclusions were reasonable.[27] This was probably the most significant victory for campaigners in the long history of the struggles for recognition that wide-scale killing had taken place during the 17–20 October period.

The delayed result of this trial was the gradual easing of access to archives on the Algerian War in general and those relating to 17 October in particular. On 5 May 1999, Prime Minister Lionel Jospin instructed key ministries to ease such access.[28] However, Jean-Luc Einaudi only gained permission to access the APP holdings in December 2000, thirty months after the historian Jean-Paul Brunet. Brunet, whose book *Police contre FLN* (published October 1999) was mainly reliant on police archives,[29] sought to minimize the numbers killed on 17–20 October 1961, stating that 'given that there were only a limited number of deaths, we can't talk of a massacre in the commonly-accepted sense of the term'.[30] Brunet's October 1999 intervention, which appeared to enter into the politics of memory of the event as much as constructing a historical account of the subject, was all the more untimely given that in August 1999 the Géronimi Report on the judicial archives had estimated at forty-eight the number of deaths on 17–18 October 1961.[31] After having spoken on 4 November 2000 of 'the tragic events of 17 October 1961 which caused the deaths of dozens of Algerians',[32] Lionel Jospin issued a more liberal circular on 13 April 2001 facilitating archival access.[33] Such shifts in position would have been inconceivable without the momentum of the two trials, and helped the campaigns for official recognition of 17 October in the approach to the fortieth anniversary. The debates of the late 1990s had rendered inoperable the official French policy of silence in place since 1961, and made the 17 October repression a central event in debates on the war, nearly forty years after it took place.

THE POLITICS OF SYMBOLIC REPARATION IN 2001

These campaigns for truth and recognition in relation to the 17 October repression were part of what Henry Rousso terms the 'desire to act retrospectively on the past', whereby political actors correct the perceived mistakes of previous political

[26] See *Le Monde* (14–15 Feb. 1999) and Einaudi, *Octobre 1961*, 50.
[27] Einaudi, *Octobre 1961*, 54 (quoting from judgment transcript). See *Le Monde* (28 Mar. 1999).
[28] See *Le Monde* (7 May 1999). [29] See also Ch. 6.
[30] Brunet, *Police contre FLN*, 247.
[31] Géronimi Report, 19. On the report, see *Le Monde* (13 Aug. 1999).
[32] Quoted in Einaudi, *Octobre 1961*, 67. [33] See *Le Monde* (28 Apr. 2001).

generations.[34] However, campaigners continued to come up against the legacy of the 'excessive risk aversion' with regard to Algerian War legacies shown by French governments since the 1960s.[35] The debates on 17 October therefore need to be considered within this wider framework of the politics of memory of the Algerian War, which were becoming a central feature of political and media debate around the new millennium, and ranged from demands for retroactive justice once official recognition was forthcoming, to symbolic demands for apologies and commemorative initiatives.[36]

The central problem here is that the French state, conceived of within Republicanism as the neutral arbiter over and above the competing interests of civil society, was in fact a key *actor* of the Algerian War. The state is therefore also a key target of reparations claims relating to, for example, 17 October, torture, or the *harkis*, at the same time as it is supposed to mediate these claims.[37] This state responsibility for specific aspects of the war such as the use of illegal violence has not been officially recognized, nor have governments allowed a wider reflection on the legacies of the colonial Republican state. For example, in the Senate on 13 June 2000, responding to a question on 17 October 1961 from Danielle Bidard-Reynet, Interior Minister Jean-Pierre Chevènement (via Jean-Jacques Queyranne) declared: 'regarding these events it isn't fair to ask the Republic to recognize its responsibility for a crime that it allegedly carried out. That would amount to an admission that the Republic had willed the tragedies that accompanied these demonstrations.'[38] This response appeared to shift responsibility for the killings down to the level of individual security force officers, a common official tactic regarding torture allegations during the Algerian War.[39] Significantly, while the 10 June 1999 law had recognized a 'war' situation in Algeria during 1954–62, it did not allow for any reflection on the notion of state responsibility.

As we shall see, one constant theme regarding the politics of memory relating to the Algerian War is that French governments, trying to put an end to demands from campaigning groups, formulate measures that only partially satisfy one particular group of memory carriers and activists. Consequently, not only the 'interested' group, but also all other groups who consider themselves to have been wronged in the past, continue to mobilize to assert their perceived legitimate demands and/or victim status. Here, the past is mobilized within a campaigning logic that, most often, refuses to take into account the sufferings of other groups.[40] Furthermore, without official moves to clarify official responsibilities, these

[34] Rousso, 'Les Raisins verts', 145.

[35] For a comparative perspective, see Paloma Aguilar, 'Justice, Politics and Memory in the Spanish Transition', in Barahona de Brito et al., *Politics of Memory*, 118.

[36] John Torpey, 'Introduction', in his *Politics and the Past*, 1–34, here 5–7.

[37] This theme is developed in Lefranc, *Politiques du pardon*.

[38] <*http://17octobre1961.free.fr/pages/dossiers/Senat.htm*> (accessed 15 Apr. 2002).

[39] Branche, *La Torture*, 411–15.

[40] On this, see Sylvie Thénault, 'France-Algérie: Pour un traitement commun du passé de la guerre d'indépendance', *Vingtième siècle: Revue d'histoire*, 85 (Jan.–Mar. 2005), 119–28.

competing claims exist in a historical, political, and ethical vacuum that encourages a dangerous relativism: official concessions granted to one group are justified to 'counter-balance' those made toward another regardless of the legitimacy of the claims made. Yet in the eyes of government, some claims remain more legitimate than others since carried by groups that are less politically marginal than others and whose claims denounce at most the passive—as opposed to active—agency of the French state.

While in the later 1990s, the institutional framework might have appeared more favourable to demands for official recognition of state responsibility for 17 October, the mainly Socialist left-coalition of 1997 to 2002 remained cautious, and was operating within a context of power-sharing (*cohabitation*) with Gaullist Jacques Chirac. At local and national levels, Communists and ecologists were more adventurous, seeking to relay social movements for symbolic justice—but these parties had minimal institutional power, as did the far left.

The period immediately before and during the 2001 commemorations of 17 October also saw a further reconfiguring of this event within wider mobilizations relating to colonial violence. Historians and campaigners highlighted that the October 1961 violence was part of a wider period of repression and needed to be understood within its war context (on both sides of the Mediterranean). In turn, it became clearer that causality of colonial state violence stemmed from a long-term historical commitment to overseas expansion that involved a violence of conquest, the maintenance of that domination—again involving repression—and the military response to struggles for national liberation. This partial reassessment of colonial state violence underlined long-term political as well as security force responsibilities. The resurgence of debates since 2000 surrounding the torture of Algerians by French security forces during the Algerian War illustrated such developments.[41] Campaigners, via an appeal in *L'Humanité* of 31 October 2000, called unsuccessfully for the President and Prime Minister to publicly acknowledge and condemn the use of torture during the war, and under the colonial system more generally.

Simultaneous to these debates on torture, and with a view to capitalizing on the political opportunity that the 2001 commemorations would provide, demands for state recognition of the 17 October repression gained momentum from 1999 onwards. As Vincent Lemire and Yann Pottin have argued, once the Papon–Einaudi libel trial had more firmly established the authenticity of numerous killings in October 1961, for some campaigners, the question of how best to characterize the killings (repression, state crime, crime against humanity, etc.) took prominence. In turn, this centred attention on the question of levels and forms of responsibility for the violence within the police and political apparatus.[42] For campaigners,

[41] See MacMaster, 'The Torture Controversy'; William B. Cohen, 'The Sudden Memory of Torture: The Algerian War in French Discourse, 2000–2001', *French Politics, Culture and Society*, 19/3 (Fall 2001), 82–94.

[42] Lemire and Pottin, ' "ICI ON NOIE LES ALGÉRIENS" ', 141–2.

President Jacques Chirac's recognition in July 1995 of French state involvement in the deportation of Jewish people during the Vichy regime served as the example that he could extend to cover state violence during the Algerian War. The debate on October 1961 thus remained in some part over-determined by the figure of Vichy.[43]

The emergence of a new campaigning association, Le 17 octobre 1961 contre l'oubli, redynamized the memorial field in relation to October 1961. Publishing an appeal in *Libération* on 19 October 1999, Olivier Revault d'Allonnes, Olivier Le Cour Grandmaison, and Sidi Mohammed Barkat wrote of a 'crime against humanity carried out by the State', calling for the Republic to recognize the crime committed, and for the dedication of a memorial site to the victims. The petition criticized the lack of accountability of political and security force actors and the message this sent to victims and their families.[44] The prime aim of campaigners was to ensure the addressing of political responsibilities.[45] One of the main initiatives of the new association was to have the October 1961 repression renamed as a 'crime against humanity' and as a 'State crime'.[46] This demand, which proved unsuccessful, stemmed in part from the virtual impossibility of any meaningful legal recourse because of existing amnesties, campaigners being well aware that their demands would remain largely symbolic. The major obstacle, in addition to amnesty legislation, was that, until its revision in 1994, legislation on crimes against humanity only covered crimes committed by the Axis Powers.[47]

Debates in 2000–1 about an official commemorative site to mark the 17 October repression further illustrate the constraining political framework within which campaigners had to work. These debates in the Paris City Council chamber (Conseil de Paris) concerned proposals from the left, endorsed by Socialist mayor Bertrand Delanoë, that a commemorative plaque to the victims of 17 October be installed next to the Pont Saint-Michel. Both before and since 2001, public recognition of the killings on 17 October has been devolved to local level.[48] Municipal debates are often just as polemical as at national level, but the presence of local councillors of Algerian origin has often catalysed local commemorative initiatives. According to Olivier Le Cour Grandmaison, the Paris plaque probably resulted from a political trade-off between national-level official recognition by Lionel Jospin—a measure the government judged inopportune—and a substitute initiative concerning Paris.[49] Justified as part of a wider 'duty to remember' in relation to the war, and alongside the 'duty to truth' that granting access to official

[43] Étienne Balibar, 'Pour la vérité sur octobre 1961', *Libération* (17 Oct. 2000).

[44] See Le Cour Grandmaison, *Le 17 octobre 1961*, 254–63.

[45] Interview (J.H.) with Olivier Le Cour Grandmaison, Paris, 12 Apr. 2005.

[46] Flyer distributed at 17 Oct. 2001 commemorations.

[47] See Nicole Dreyfus, 'Le Massacre couvert par l'impunité juridique', in Le Cour Grandmaison, *Le 17 octobre 1961*, 83–8.

[48] Since 2001, activists in suburban Nanterre, Saint-Denis, Aubervilliers, Argenteuil, and Sarcelles have taken advantage of the more favourable power relations within left-leaning local councils to install monuments or rename streets in memory of 17 Oct.

[49] Interview (J.H.) with Olivier Le Cour Grandmaison, Paris, 12 April 2005.

archives is supposed to facilitate, the initiators of the Paris plaque argued that, regarding 17 October, there was the need to 'include this event in the collective memory of Parisians'.[50] This insistence on a Paris-level, rather than national French collective memory attempted to minimize the political stakes in the face of the hostility such proposals aroused.

These debates on the Paris plaque often reflected the rhetorical framework of political and ethical arguments during the Algerian War. This framework involves accusation, counter-accusation, and denial, and/or justification advanced by the opposing sides, as we saw with the Papon–Einaudi trial.[51] However, we also need to remember that the very conditions of possibility for such debates on the commemorative plaque indicate, at the same time, a shift in power relations, and greater awareness of 17 October on the left, not only since 1961 but since the 1980s.

More specifically, at times, the polemical debates on the Paris plaque harked back to debates in the weeks following 17 October 1961, when Gaullist and left-wing representatives had been locked in fierce dispute. Not all left-wing representatives were in favour of the plaque proposal. For Georges Sarre, close to the Jacobin national republicans: 'How can we expect our young Muslim fellow countrymen to be proud to be French if their country's history is only presented as a list of crimes?'[52] Ranged against the proposals, right-winger Yves Pozzo-di-Borgo asked: 'What about having a monument or plaque to the memory of Algerians assassinated in France and Algeria by their fellow countrymen of the FLN?'[53] This represented a repeat of the oft-heard right-wing position that refused to consider the pro-FLN Algerians as victims of French state violence. Gaullist Philippe Séguin attacked a move he saw as designed 'less to pay homage to the victims [*of 17 October*] than to accuse the political authorities in 1961'. The right underlined the numbers of police killed by the FLN due to 'reciprocal' violence that was regrettable but part of any war situation. Jean Tiberi asked why it was necessary to go looking for those responsible when this risked reopening old wounds.[54] Indeed, how could the Gaullists condemn an act of repression that served, in their eyes, a justified political end and was, in turn, principally explainable by FLN violence against the police?

The Paris City Council voted for a plaque, although the wording was deliberately vague, and based, ironically, on the wording on the Charonne Métro station commemorative plaque: 'In memory of the many Algerians killed during the bloody repression of the peaceful demonstration of 17 October 1961'. The wording thus hid the agency of the perpetrators of this repression, and at the plaque's

[50] Nicole Borvo speech, <*http://paris.fr/bmo/debat/cmdebat20010925/cmdebat20010925-24. htm*> (accessed 5 May 2005).

[51] See Lefranc, *Politiques du pardon*; Branche, *La Torture*, 423–35.

[52] <*http://paris.fr/bmo/debat/cmdebat20010925/cmdebat20010925-24.htm*> (accessed 5 May 2005).

[53] Ibid.

[54] <*http://paris.fr/bmo/debat/cmdebat20010925/cmdebat20010925-25.htm*> (accessed 5 May 2005).

unveiling on 17 October 2001, no government member attended in an official capacity.[55] Nonetheless, this measure finally saw the physical inscription of October 1961 within public memory in France. In October 1985, SOS-Racisme had placed a temporary plaque by the Seine. In 1991, the authorities had removed the plaque placed at Bezons by the ANM. The 2001 plaque was there for good. However, the plaque is only on the Right Bank of the Seine since it was politically impossible to have it on the Left Bank, situated in the 5th arrondissement, which had a Gaullist mayor. The success of the Paris plaque would later grow into a suspicion, expressed by some campaigners interviewed for this project, that the plaque had merely furnished the pretext by which to bury demands for French state recognition.

2001 COMMEMORATIONS

The fortieth-anniversary commemoration of 17 October 1961 reflected the unparalleled visibility this event had come to occupy within the French political landscape. This was the first truly national commemoration in France, with various initiatives organized by an umbrella collective of organizations in up to fifty different towns. In central Paris, approximately 8,000 demonstrators marched from the Grands Boulevards to the Pont Saint-Michel on 17 October 2001 (see Photo 12). Plays, documentaries, radio programmes, public meetings, exhibitions, special re-editions of books, and new historical publications challenged the official narrative of the 17 October events and revealed the diversity of experiences linked to the repression and how these could be represented, showing a combination of truth work and memory work.[56] Marchers in Paris demanded official recognition and condemnation of the 'State crime', activists underlining that their work targeting politicians was incomplete since the Paris plaque represented only the 'start of recognition'.[57] Indeed, this incomplete official recognition appeared to mirror the partial awareness and condemnation of the violence throughout French society. In a detailed opinion poll taken in early October 2001, nearly one in two people questioned (47%) in France said they had heard of 17 October. Of those questioned, 39 per cent stated that the repression should be officially condemned.[58] In wishing to 'collectivize' this memory, campaigners were looking to sensitize the vast majority of people in France born between 1950 and 1980 to the 17 October repression, with significant proportions of other age cohorts not necessarily aware of the repression either. The commemorations therefore marked the dual memorial strategy of appeals to government and awareness raising towards society.

[55] See *Libération* and *El Watan* (18 Oct. 2001); *Le Monde* (19 Oct. 2001). See also Jelen, '17 octobre 1961—17 octobre 2001', 33–4.

[56] See *L'Humanité* (13–14, 17, 18, 19 Oct. 2001); *Libération* (15, 16, 17, 18 Oct. 2001); *Le Monde* (16, 17, 18, 19 Oct. 2001).

[57] Mouloud Aounit in *Le Monde* (19 Oct. 2001).

[58] *L'Humanité* (13 Oct. 2001).

12. Demonstration in Paris on 17 October 2001 to commemorate the fortieth anniversary of the massacre. (By permission of the association Au nom de la mémoire.)

This seemingly unified commemoration reignited the long-standing rivalries between the PCF and a more radical anti-colonialist tradition: *Libération* and *L'Humanité* exchanged critical comments regarding the PCF's reaction to the October 1961 violence.[59] The pages of *L'Humanité* were also testament to the continuing tensions within the PCF regarding the party's wartime role.[60] Also, both during the Paris commemorative march and the speeches afterwards, the Mouvement de l'immigration et des banlieues (Immigration and Suburbs Movement) underlined the need to address institutional racism, and linked contemporary police violence back to October 1961 via the example of intervening police killings of Algerians, voicing demands that made the more mainstream left feel ill at ease.[61]

In 2001, the memorial initiatives in Algeria remained largely derivative of the debates on October 1961 in France, while reflecting the contemporary political context in Algeria, as the country was undergoing political restabilization after the terrible violence of the 1990s.[62] President Abdelaziz Bouteflika, elected in April

[59] See *L'Humanité* (18 Oct. 2001), reacting to an article in *Libération* on 17 Oct. 2001 that suggested the PCF had failed to react adequately during and after the repression.

[60] See the letters pages in *L'Humanité* of 25 Oct. 2001 and *L'Humanité-Dimanche* (17–18 Nov. 2001) regarding Clara Benoîts's position in *L'Humanité* (18 Oct. 2001).

[61] Flyer entitled 'Pas de commémoration sans justice' (No commemoration without justice) from 17 Oct. 2001 commemoration. Here *banlieues* refers to the poor, often out-lying suburbs in which many immigrants and their descendants live.

[62] Stora, *La Guerre invisible*.

1999 in dubious circumstances after his predecessor Liamine Zéroual's premature resignation, sought to continue and encourage the limited process of re-evaluation of Algerian War histories that had been under way since the post-1989 opening of the Algerian polity to greater pluralism, and the ensuing weakening of the FLN.[63] Bouteflika also worked to ensure the normalization of Algerian political life and instill 'national reconciliation' via amnesties and a swift 'transition' after the violence of the previous decade. Rehabilitating key nationalist figures Messali Hadj and Ferhat Abbas, and calling for closer cooperation with France, Bouteflika could also skilfully reactivate the more partisan Algerian nationalist discourse to secure support at home.[64] For example, on a state visit to Paris in June 2000, he referred to the *harkis* as 'collaborators'. The extent of real historical reconciliation therefore remained in doubt.

In Algeria, a balanced documentary by Ali Fateh Ayadi appeared on television on 16 October 2001, situating the 17 October 1961 demonstrations within the long-term historical narrative of Algerian nationalism and containing interviews with former members of the Comité fédéral of the French Federation.[65] On 17 October 2001, a lengthy televised debate brought together, amongst others, Ali Haroun, and Omar Boudaoud, and memory activists Jean-Luc Einaudi and Monique Hervo.[66] Tensions remained however between the official Organisation nationale des Moudhajidîn and the FF-FLN.[67] The official (pro-FLN) newspaper *El Moudjahid* recorded initiatives in schools,[68] and published a letter from Abdelaziz Ziari (Minister for Algerians Overseas and Regional Coooperation) stating that Algeria recognized 'the commitment and spirit of sacrifice of our community abroad', whose roots 'go back to the dawn of the nationalist movement'.[69] This showed both the usual official desire to restate the attachment of Algerians in France to the Algerian nation and the newer acceptance of the role of Algerian migration within a longer term historical narrative. Similarly, the Union des Algériens en France et en Europe—successor to the Amicale—published an extensive dossier on October 1961. The publication underlined the role Algerian women in France had played on the 17 October, 20 October, and 9 November 1961 demonstrations, comparing this action to 10–11 December 1960 in Algeria and proving 'the Algerian woman's presence in the struggle for national independence'.[70] This was part of a discourse deliberately extolling the place of Algerian women in the Revolution to better contrast with the perceived image of inactive women promoted within radical Islamism.[71]

[63] See Stora, 'La Mémoire retrouvée'. [64] Roberts, *The Battlefield*, 282–6.
[65] *La 7è wilaya ou la Fédération de France du FLN*, shown on Canal Algérie.
[66] *Vérités: Aujourd'hui, le 17 octobre 1961*, by Ali Fateh Ayadi, shown on Canal Algérie.
[67] See the interview with Mohand-Akli Benyounès in *Le Soir d'Algérie* (19 Dec. 2004).
[68] See *El Moudjahid* (18 Oct. 2001). [69] *El Moudjahid* (17 Oct. 2001).
[70] <*http://www.actualite-emigration.org/act-emi-dos-spe-oct/dospecial.html*> (accessed 9 Jan. 2005).
[71] Benjamin Stora, 'L'Algérie d'une guerre à l'autre', in Dominique Borne, Jean-Louis Nembrini, and Jean-Pierre Rioux (eds.), *Apprendre et enseigner la guerre d'Algérie et le Maghreb contemporain* (Versailles: Centre régional de documentation pédagogique de l'Académie de Versailles, 2002), 94.

While the Algerian state continues to mobilize for the annual commemorations via its Cultural Centre in Paris, and through its consular offices, this official role has diminished since the time of FLN dominance before 1989. We saw elements of this in the previous chapter, as the Amicale responded in 1986 to the emergence of a new collective political actor, the descendants of Algerian migrants. Other campaigning since then within the Algerian diaspora in France has also filled the memorial void and challenged the official Algerian symbolic meanings placed on 17 October commemorations both in Algeria and, to a lesser extent, France. This process, still emerging, shows the relevance of Paul A. Silverstein's conceptualization of the Franco-Algerian political, cultural, and social spheres as forming a transpolitical space that is both reactive to and yet goes beyond national space(s).[72] Important factors here include: the renewal of the Berber cultural movement since the 1980s:[73] the significant investment in memory activism relating to October 1961 by many Berber associations (e.g. Association culturelle berbère), and local associations with a strong Kabyle presence in the northern Paris suburbs;[74] the reaffirmation of transpolitical activism in the face of repeated political conflicts in Kabylia.[75] All of these forms of political and cultural activism reveal the multiple counter-memorial functions that the 17 October commemorations can fulfil within the Franco-Algerian context, as memory activism provides a political resource through which to assert autonomy from the Algerian and French states and political parties and represents a complex, multi-sited form of political intervention.

AN INCREASING DIVERSIFICATION OF MEMORIAL VOICES

The politics of memory around 2001 also affected memorial dynamics within the Algerian communities, to which the analysis now returns. Given that the Papon–Einaudi trial had established greater legal credence to survivor and witness testimony, the emphasis on the weight of proof diminished in the nature of newspaper, website and radio testimonies that Algerians gave in the months around the October 2001 commemorations in France.

Given the lack of official recognition of 17 October, this counter-narrative function of testimony did remain, and some interviews and other collected testimony continued to place narrative focus on the perpetrators of French state violence, thus potentially reducing Algerians to victim status since the interview focus was denunciatory.[76] However, not all Algerians' testimonies necessarily

[72] Paul A. Silverstein, *Algeria in France: Transpolitics, Race and Nation* (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2004), 7–8.
[73] Ibid. 174–83.
[74] e.g. La Maison de l'Algérie (Saint-Ouen), and the Paris-based Agence de Promotion des Cultures et du Voyage.
[75] See Roberts, *The Battlefield*, 'The Kabyle Cockpit', 292–302.
[76] See e.g. Einaudi, *Octobre 1961*.

insist on this aspect. Former demonstrators on 17 October, and Algerians (and Moroccans) who had experienced life in Paris in the late-war period more generally, rarely express great hatred towards the Paris police, although they often vilify the *harkis*. Indeed, Algerians often surprise interviewers by stating that on 17 October police simply 'did their job', and Algerian former demonstrators rarely self-represent as victims, and shun any approach that might accord their experiences 'heroic' status.

However, one partial shift witnessed in the years immediately before and after 2001 was that memory campaigners successfully created a 'space' within which Algerians' memories of 17 October could be heard in their divergence and sometimes contradictions, and were therefore not explicitly limited to their status as counter-narratives.[77] This development partially recentred the debates away from a focus on the perpetrators and more on the Algerian demonstrators, their memories, migratory trajectories, and the considerable complexity of their wartime experiences. This development may well have also been linked to the greater time lapse—both from the event evoked and the subsequent 'first-waves' of testimonies of that event—that brings 'more reflection, analysis, surfacing of connections' as experiential groups become aware of the testimonies of other groups and situate themselves within a wider framework.[78]

This process also explains our desire to seek out Algerian demonstrators from 17 October who had publicized their memories at different points since the 1980s. Of course, this approach tends to focus on those Algerians who are socially and culturally most integrated into French society, and may reveal only parts of the multiple processes and attitudes towards the past relating to the decision to take personal memories onto the local or wider public stage. However, both these interviews, and the examination of various forms of testimony relating to 17 October in newspapers, on radio programmes and websites, allow us to distinguish between several groups. First, there are those Algerians who are willing to speak or write openly in the national media (in France and/or Algeria), those who still only come forward under anonymity,[79] and those willing to speak only in what they consider the safer context of public meetings attended mostly by fellow Algerians, or within Algerian-based associations. Within this last category, there are those who may or may not then welcome an approach from a journalist or researcher seeking a formal interview. Some Algerians in 2001 were speaking out for the first (and occasionally last) time, others were used to giving interviews. For the 2001 commemorations, a larger number of testimonies from women showed that, until that point, there had been a gender differential in testimonies.[80] Similarly, the

[77] See e.g. <*http://17octobre1961.free.fr/pages/Temoin-Docu.htm*>, accessed 1 July 2005.

[78] Feitlowitz, *Lexicon of Terror*, 16.

[79] See e.g. the article by Marianne Gomez in *La Croix* (17 Oct. 2001).

[80] See the various women's testimonies available at <*http://17octobre1961.free.fr/pages/ dossiers/*>, and those of Yamna Abssi and Khédidja Msirdi in Le Cour Grandmaison, *Le 17 octobre 1961*, 30–1.

decision to speak to family members about their experiences in October 1961, where it came, occurred with significant time lapses between individuals.

The number of Algerians who have publicly come forward in France to give testimony about October 1961 remains relatively low—at most several hundreds out of tens of thousands. This sobering thought reminds us that many Algerians will probably always remain silent in public about this episode. Furthermore, the importance of the wider political context stimulating or limiting dispositions for speaking out was evidenced by the fear some Algerians expressed during the spring 2002 presidential elections that saw the far-right candidate Jean-Marie Le Pen win through to the second round.[81] Feelings of marginality and vulnerability persist within the wartime Algerian generations. Given that the memorial initiative is largely in the hands of younger generations, the conceptual difference that these younger people bring to the symbolic importance of 17 October may not reflect the concerns of all former demonstrators. We know from Maurice Halbwachs's work that the widening of memory is tantamount to its 'reinvention'.[82] The campaigning focus on one particular incidence of repression (the day of 17 October 1961) may not always have helped those Algerians who had suffered violence before or after. All these factors may help explain the considerable and lasting discrepancies, proportionately speaking, between the numbers of Algerian and French public testimonies of 17 October. For example, in Daniel Kupferstein's 2001 documentary film *Dissimulation d'un massacre* (Concealment of a massacre), only six Algerians (one of whom is Ali Haroun) are interviewed, as opposed to twenty-three French people.

There is also an increasingly rich inter-generational dynamic reconfiguring the memorial landscape of 17 October. We saw that, in the 1980s and 1990s, the pioneering memory activism from within the Algerian migrant communities was in itself multi-generational, often instilling a new memorial dynamic within some Algerian families. This memory work therefore did not simply take place from the older generation(s) (parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles, and older siblings) to subsequent generations according to the established understanding of memory transmission. Sociologists and anthropologists working on inter-generational relations and memory transmission with Algerian migrant communities in France have found a wider pattern of 'reversal' of the usual model of memory transmission.[83] This memory work was by definition a two-way inter-generational process engendered by the entrepreneurial memorial activities of the children and, latterly, grandchildren of Algerian migrants, often in conjunction with anti-racist associations, former anti-colonial activists, the far left, journalists, and, latterly, teachers and researchers. The memories of those people who did not experience the events

[81] Conversation (J.H.) with Monique Hervo, Paris, 6 June 2002.

[82] Namer, 'Postface' to Halbwachs, *Les Cadres sociaux*, 316.

[83] Paul A. Silverstein, *Algeria in France*, 154; Guénif-Souilamas, *Des 'beurettes' aux descendantes d'immigrants nord-africains*, 107–16; Lepoutre and Cannoodt, *Souvenirs de familles immigrées*, 13–14.

are a mixture of inter-personally transmitted memories and memories acquired via some external medium (reading, radio, television).[84]

While memory activism regarding 17 October is multi-ethnic, different groups stress different elements of 17 October. Activists not from the Algerian communities tend to concentrate on a denunciation of the French state. Those from the Algerian communities usually do not simply seek official French state recognition of the violence. Through their memorial or, indeed, historical work, they also seek wider recognition of their parents' role as historical actors and their place within French history and society, often with the aim of underscoring the dignity and agency of these generations. Here it is often difficult to isolate the specific case of 17 October from the wider reconstruction of migrant trajectories, in which the repression may or may not play a role.[85] Some of this memory work seeks to record Algerians' wartime memorial voices before they die out. We can also speak of a further diversification of the vectors conveying this symbolic investment, given the development of film projects, literary initiatives, web-based projects, educational projects, or private memory initiatives involving producing books on family histories.

From the late 1990s onwards, a newer micro-generation of descendants of Algerians discovered the 17 October demonstrations thanks to the various memorial pioneers of the 1970s, 1980s, and earlier 1990s. Often these young people would want to understand why their parents or grandparents had not previously evoked the October demonstrations or, more widely, their experiences during the war. A virtuous circle therefore evolved, whereby parents and grandparents were more willing to talk and their children and grandchildren more interested in listening.[86] This broke what Belkacem Smaïli, a former demonstrator and subsequent memory activist in suburban Sarcelles, calls the psychological 'closed circle' in which he had been trapped, and from which his grandchildren's—as opposed to his children's—questions about the Algerian War period freed him. In addition, the greater societal interest in Algerian War and migrant memories ensured that such themes found a place in some school history projects, in the context of which former demonstrators such as M. Smaïli would be invited to speak.[87]

Those under 20 were not the only people discovering 17 October for the first time in the period after 1997. Much of the private memory work undertaken often concerns those in their thirties and forties. In the new millennium, the memory work undertaken in relation to October 1961, the Algerian War, and migrant memories more generally therefore now combines several generations of activists and participants, resulting in a varied patchwork of memory work.[88]

[84] Lepoutre and Cannoodt, *Souvenirs de familles immigrées*, 295.

[85] See e.g. Yamina Benguigui's film *Mémoires d'immigrés* (1997).

[86] See <*http://17octobre1961.free.fr/pages/dossiers/TemoignageMyriam.htm*> (accessed 1 Dec. 2003) for the testimony of one daughter of Algerian demonstrators on 17 Oct.

[87] Interview (J.H.), Sarcelles, 13 Apr. 2005.

[88] See Lepoutre and Cannoodt, *Souvenirs de familles immigrées*.

Similarly, within each generation of descendants of Algerian migrants, there will be a variety of attitudes towards these evocations of the past. Some may view it as a resource, as we have just seen. Others, on the contrary, flee what they may feel is a community identity.

The greater temporal and conceptual distance from the Algerian War affecting the post-1997 cohort more than that of the 1980s has arguably also contributed to the development of historical as well as memory work relating to the war. This is not a phenomenon unique to Algerian migrations and affects all post-Algerian War generations.[89] However, the percentage of historical studies as opposed to memory work on the Algerian War is not necessarily higher than in 1990, given the exponential increase in memory work sustained by political and media debates. There is therefore no teleological shift from memory to history, but an evolving relationship between the two mediated by the political, social, and cultural context.

In both the memorial and historical work under way, women descendants of Algerian migrants play an increasingly visible role. However, more work needs to be done on how gender dynamics affect memory transmission and produce different symbolic investments in memory.[90] Gender has seldom played a central role in analyses of memories of the Algerian War, and the male-dominated language of 'younger brothers' and 'fathers' used to describe the supposedly central relationships within the Algerian family and migrant communities more generally is often accepted unquestioningly. This has often removed women's visibility from memorial activism, and their role in family memory. Often, memory work by women seeks to retrace the female migrant experience of the older family generations.[91]

Wider socio-economic shifts within the trajectories of Algerian migrants and their descendants have also encouraged memory activism. The partial social mobility and hence greater social diversity within migrant communities, may—as within any group—provoke the desire to enquire into one's family history, a desire that is often informed and enabled by access to cultural resources.[92]

However, just as many Algerians will not want to speak publicly about 17 October, we should note evidence from detailed empirical studies that have revealed the lasting difficulties in memory transmission across and within the Algerian communities—but far from exclusively such groups—regarding the Algerian War. Today, some analysts suggest, the 'Beur generation', some of whom took on this mantle in the 1980s and 1990s, has been unable to transmit the memories

[89] See Abrial, *Les Enfants de harkis*; Dalila Kerchouche, *Mon père, ce harki* (Paris: Seuil, 2003); Buono, *Pieds-noirs de père en fils*; Mauss-Copeaux, *Appelés en Algérie*.

[90] Guénif-Souilamas, *Des 'beurettes' aux descendantes d'immigrants nord-africains*, 123–4.

[91] See Farida Hamak, *Ma mère: Histoire d'une immigration* (Paris: Zellige, 2004); Ourdia Mougenot, *Trois femmes kabyles: Histoire d'une relation entre la France et l'Algérie* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 2004).

[92] Lepoutre and Cannoodt, *Souvenirs de familles immigrées*. See also Abrial, *Les Enfants de harkis*, 218–20.

of the Algerian War to many of the adolescents of the new millennium.[93] Associations like Au nom de la mémoire, for example, appear to constitute a bridge that serves to transmit wartime and migrant memories whereas the wider social frameworks for such memories have yet to acquire firmer foundations. This should remind us of the lasting power relations that underscore the conditions of possibility for the transmission of memory within all social groups and at national level. Hence, for some, the importance of the inscription of the history of this episode of the Algerian War within school textbooks, another area in which the demands for symbolic reparations have only proved partially successful.[94]

This survey of an increasingly complex pattern of memorial voices would be incomplete without examining some of the cultural memory vectors of 17 October that have multiplied since the mid-1990s.[95] This production has often reflected the concerns of memory activism, showing, first, a fascination with the investigative aspect of proof and gaining access to archives in the face of official denials and cover-ups. Following on from Didier Daeninckx's thriller *Meurtres pour mémoire* (Murders for the Record), which remains the best-known literary portrayal of 17 October,[96] Gérard Streiff's *Les Caves de la Goutte d'Or* (The Cellars of the Goutte d'Or) adopts similar investigative ground, and centres more on the former head of the FPA than on Papon.[97] Mehdi Lallaoui's *Une nuit d'octobre* (One Night in October) continued the vein of counter-investigative thriller, this time loosely based on the Papon–Einaudi libel trial:[98] here, obsession with contacting and convincing witnesses to testify at the trial links in with the principal character Dadou's awareness of the difficulty his Algerian family members have in verbalizing their own experiences of police violence in 1961. Leïla Sebbar's multi-vocal novel *La Seine était rouge* (The Seine was Red) also gives voice to this problem, another key theme in such literary works.[99]

Many of these novels portraying 17 October and figuring memory as an object of representation also underline the multi-generational and multi-ethnic aspect of memory work, and reveal the plurality of experiences and memories of the Algerian War, the 17 October demonstrations, and their repression.[100] These polyphonous novels by Lallaoui, Sebbar, Lallaoui, and Streiff, and plays such as *Déni de justice (témoignages contre l'oubli*) (Denial of Justice (Testimonies against

[93] See Saïd Bouamama, *Héritiers involontaires de la guerre d'Algérie: Jeunes manosquins issus de l'immigration algérienne* (Manosque: Éditions du CREOPS, 2003); Abdellali Hajjat, *Immigration postcoloniale et mémoire* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 2005).

[94] See Borne et al., *Apprendre et enseigner la guerre d'Algérie*. For an example of a school project on the Algerian War and 17 Oct., see *Lettres croisées (Oran-Villiers-le-Bel) 1961–1962* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 2004), by students at the Collège Léon Blum, Villiers-le-Bel.

[95] See Anne Donadey, *Recasting Postcolonialism*, ch. 2, 'The "Algeria Syndrome" ', 19–42. For the earlier period, see Philip Dine, *Images of the Algerian War: French Fiction and Film, 1954–1992* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994).

[96] Daeninckx, *Meurtres*.

[97] Gérard Streiff, *Les Caves de la Goutte d'Or* (Paris: Éditions Baleine-Le Seuil, 2001).

[98] Mehdi Lallaoui, *Une nuit d'octobre* (Paris: Éditions Alternatives, 2001).

[99] Leïla Sebbar, *La Seine était rouge* (Paris: Éditions Thierry Magnier, 1999).

[100] See also Arno Bertina, *Le Dehors ou la migration des truites* (Paris: Actes Sud, 2001).

Forgetting),[101] often integrate real or imagined testimonies from the period: the latter and Streiff's novel use legal testimonies by Algerians. In each case, the plot unfolds within the key physical memory sites of Paris or its suburban topography that here figure as counter-memorial sites,[102] and reveal both local and transnational identifications. Literary and filmic representations of 17 October have often mirrored historical studies since the 1990s, by conveying the complexity of the repression and its context. By showing the strict discipline to which the FLN subjected Algerians, and the tensions within the FLN about the policy of assassination of police officers, such representations disrupt the official FLN narrative of one heroic people united in struggle. These films, and the novels, also portray the minority of the metropolitan French population who showed solidarity with the Algerians, and the FLN.[103] Whether central to the plot or but one theme amongst others,[104] the 17 October demonstrations and their repression figure as an event that disrupts lives and trajectories, reconfiguring political attitudes, symbolizing wider anti-colonial resistance and colonial repression.

ASSESSING LEGACIES OF COLONIAL VIOLENCE

The 2001 commemorations of 17 October marked the high point of memory activism. A further shift in the institutional context followed when the right returned to government in June 2002. Jacques Chirac continued in power after defeating Jean-Marie Le Pen in the second round of presidential elections in May 2002. Within this constricted political framework, there was little possibility of official recognition of responsibility for 17 October. No former senior police officer has come forward to cast new insights on the events, and many of the key actors (e.g. Maurice Papon, Raymond Montaner) consider themselves 'victims' of a campaign of wilful 'misinformation', a sign that their versions are losing their authority, if not their power. Indeed, various groups viewed the Papon libel defeat and the 2001 commemorative plaque as 'provocations' to which they were keen to respond, and refuse the term 'massacre' to describe 17 October.[105]

After 2002, there was an initial period of considerable diplomatic *rapprochement* between Algeria and France during the respective presidencies of Chirac and Bouteflika. However, the voting of the French law of 23 February 2005 that

[101] Directed by Nabil Farès, and performed during the Oct. 2001 commemorations. See also *Requiem Opus 61 and El Menfi* by Mohammed Rouabhi (performed 2001 and 2002) (see *Le Monde* (16 Oct. 2001), 31); Gilles Granouillet, *Nuit d'automne à Paris* (Paris: L'Avant-Scène Théâtre/Collection des Quatre-Vents, 2002).

[102] See also François Maspero, *Les Passagers du Roissy-Express* (Paris: Seuil, 1990), 256–9.

[103] See Bourlem Guerdjou's powerful film adaptation of Brahim Benaïcha's *Vivre au paradis* (Arte Vidéo, 1999); see also *Nuit noire: 17 octobre 1961* by Alain Tasma and Patrick Rotman, shown on Canal Plus television in June 2005.

[104] See e.g. Nancy Huston, *L'Empreinte de l'Ange* (Paris: Actes Sud, 1998); Tassadit Imache, *Presque un frère* (Paris: Actes Sud/Babel, 2000); Paul Smaïl, *Vivre me tue* (Paris: Balland, 1997).

[105] See Branche, *La Guerre d'Algérie*, 228–31.

expressed France's 'recognition' towards the role played by France's colonial settlers, and stipulated that 'school programmes recognize in particular the positive role of the French overseas presence, especially in North Africa', dampened Franco-Algerian relations. This law showed the complex interaction of internal and foreign policy priorities determining how both Algeria and France manage the legacies of the Algerian War. It was also proof of the institutional shift towards certain *pied-noir* and *harki* pressure groups in France.[106] This highly controversial law arguably represented an example of what had already been termed 'colonial revisionism', by which the Gaullist right and elements of the Jacobin left sought to respond to the growing revelations of the extent of French colonial violence.[107] Such a law merely highlighted the increasing gap between official French positions on the Algerian War and French colonialism on the one hand, and the advances in historical knowledge and the positions of many left-wing memory activists on the other. While in the years since 2001 the media visibility of 17 October has waned, the impact of the memory activism surrounding 17 October has further transformed the context in which 17 October is evoked within political and media debates. A wider reappraisal of France's colonial legacies has emerged, marking a further reframing of 17 October within an arguably better suited historical context, to which the discussion now turns.[108]

For some commentators such as the historian Guy Pervillé, the insistence on French state violence, in particular that of 17 October, masks discussion of violence suffered by *pieds-noirs* at the hands of French security forces (e.g. rue d'Isly, Algiers, 26 March 1962), or the FLN (e.g. Oran, 5 July 1962).[109] Pervillé suggests that academic interest or otherwise for a particular topic is derivative of the wider memorial competition between the different memory carriers of the Algerian War. However, far more writing has expressed *pied-noir* and French military interests than the points of view of the pro-FLN Algerians or French. Notwithstanding this, the focus on the 17 October violence in France has probably obscured other acts of colonial violence during the Algerian War, earlier periods of French colonial occupation in Algeria, and in other French imperial contexts.[110] This is largely a French-based discussion, since in both official and popular memory in Algeria, the May 1945 repression has always figured more prominently than 17 October. Furthermore, when Algerian observers write of 'the events of October', they often refer to those of October 1988 rather than October 1961, since the former are of more immediate political relevance (see Chapter 11).

[106] See Claude Liauzu, 'Une loi contre l'histoire', *Le Monde diplomatique* (Apr. 2005), 28.

[107] Nicolas Bancel, Pascal Blanchard, and Françoise Vergès, *La République coloniale: Essai sur une utopie* (Paris: Albin Michel, 2003), 36.

[108] See Claude Liauzu (ed.), *Colonisation: Droit d'inventaire* (Paris: Armand Colin, 2004); Sophie Dulucq and Colette Zytnicki, 'Penser le passé colonial français: Entre perspectives historiographiques et résurgences des mémoires', *Vingtième siècle: Revue d'histoire*, 86 (Apr.–June 2005), 59–69.

[109] Guy Pervillé, *Pour une histoire de la guerre d'Algérie* (Paris: Éditions Picard, 2002), 304–5.

[110] Bancel et al., *La République coloniale*, 134.

However, if in memorial terms the October 1961 repression has been hotly debated it is arguably because it condenses many of the tensions and conflicts that are characteristic of colonial governance, of the Algerian War, and within post-colonial France and Algeria. Reading 17 October in the colonial and post-colonial context therefore involves assessing its historical significance within a longer term framework, and can suggest how memorial debates might incorporate this.

Colonialism was, in most cases, a denial of the cultural, historical, and social memories of the colonized, disrupting indigenous cultural practices.[111] As we have seen, colonial governance also aimed to hide the violence inherent in its functioning and reproduction, and censored those who denounced its repression of anti-colonial resistance. Colonialism therefore reproduced itself through a denial of key elements of the colonial past and present, producing silence and/or forgetting, in both colonial and metropolitan spheres, albeit in different ways.

Many aspects of the 17 October events are representative of such, and attendant, colonial power relations. First, the ethnic-based distinctions within French citizenship regarding the Paris curfew that refused true equality to *Français musulmans d'Algérie* show that there was *already* an 'internal' frontier within French citizenship and that such developments are not merely a post-colonial development, but representative of the impossible community of citizens in a colonial state.[112] Second, we should note the hugely disproportionate levels of state violence to repress an act of anti-colonial resistance, itself using the metropolis as a political and financial resource, and the subsequent short- and long-term covering up of such repression. Third, we could quote the unknown number of Algerian victims in relation to the number of police victims of FLN violence before 17 October, or the number of victims at Charonne in relation to violence during 17–20 October.

Yet the historical or memorial focus in relation to 17 October cannot be limited to an examination of the relationship between the French state and Algerians. The complex dynamics within Algerian nationalism, between the FLN and the French left, and within the French left were also key determining factors in the demonstrations, just as they have structured the memorial afterlives of 17 October, as we have seen. Furthermore, the disparity in public spheres between Algeria and metropolitan France eliciting some, albeit limited protest in Paris against police violence shows that colony and metropolis were never identical political spheres, each having their own idioms of dehumanization of the colonized, and in turn resistance to such processes.[113]

As Sidi Mohammed Barkat has argued, a historical interrogation of the repression on 17 October must serve to provide a finer understanding of the mechanisms of the colonial state, otherwise it might appear as but one 'unfortunate

[111] Albert Memmi, *Portrait du colonisé,* précédé de: *Portrait du colonisateur* (Paris: Gallimard, 1985; 1st publ. 1957).
[112] See Balibar, *Les Frontières.*
[113] Frantz Fanon, *Peau noire, masques blancs* (Paris: Seuil, 1975; 1st publ. 1952).

incident' devoid of longer term causality and indeed significance.[114] Following Pascal Blanchard, we could say that colonial violence was not an abnormal factor in a normal system, but a normalized practice in an abnormal system of human relations.[115] If we understand how colonialism attempted to dehumanize the colonized, rendering them always already likely to be killed, the sedimentation of attitudes and practices attendant with colonial governance amongst the dominant groups within colonial societies, and the legacies of such attitudes and practices, become clearer.[116] Similarly, we also understand better the strength of opposition to such a situation by the colonized.

In turn, this allows us to interpret the memorial significance of 17 October for subsequent post-colonial generations of Algerian descendants, and why these political actors have seen 17 October as central to explaining key elements of their political and social belonging. The descendants of Algerian demonstrators on 17 October stepped into the memorial landscape of the Algerian War in post-colonial conditions partially defined by many of the legacies we have just outlined. The further complexification of memorial discourses on 17 October during and after the 1980s occurred because of the emergence of these new actors, whose discourses slowly became predominant within such memory activism in France. While descendants of Algerians drew parallels with the past, they were aware that they did not and could not share all the experiences of their parents' generation(s), nor did they want to. Simultaneously, they denounced the erasure of that past by obfuscation, silence, and non-transmission. We have here the crux of the inspiration behind such memory activism that bears striking similarities with the demands of the marchers on 17 October 1961: the right to equality, dignity, agency, and a refusal of repression, racism, and cultural denial, hence the demands for the 'right to memory'. The post-colonial situation, as Abdelhafid Hammouche has usefully put it, is one of neither total continuity nor a complete break with the colonial past.[117] As we have seen regarding 17 October, what is transmitted, why and how it is transmitted, and the conditions of possibility for its reception remain profoundly informed by the colonial encounter.

However, as it became possible to 'retrieve' elements of the memories of 17 October, commentators raised questions regarding the use that such memories served, often derivative of critiques initially formulated of the duty to remember in relation to the Holocaust.[118] We will discuss two, apparently linked, dangers here: ethnicization and victimization.

[114] S. M. Barkat, 'Corps et état: Nouvelles notes sur le 17 octobre 1961' (2003), available at *<http://www.oumma.com/article.php3?id_article=1589>*, accessed 3 Aug. 2005.

[115] 'Décoloniser les imaginaires', *Les Inrockuptibles*, 490 (20–6 Apr. 2005), 20–1.

[116] See Paul Gilroy, *After Empire: Melancholia or Convivial Culture?* (London: Routledge, 2004), 47–63.

[117] Abdelhafid Hammouche, 'Altérité et état-nation', in Mohammed Seffahi (ed.), *Manifeste pour l'hospitalité—aux Minguettes* (Grigny: Éditions Paroles d'aube, 1999), 45.

[118] Tzvetan Todorov, *Les Abus de la mémoire* (Paris: Arléa, 1998), 15.

First, the fear expressed by some commentators is that evoking the memories of colonial repression (of which 17 October) could help foster a 'retreat' into communal identity antithetical to Republicanism. By mobilizing the memories of colonial violence, this argument goes, activists position themselves as representative of a 'community' and hence contribute to the ethnicization of French society, that is, a society in which one's ethnic identity is considered the primary social identifier. However, the memory activism of ANM, for example, has based itself upon demands for equal access to the past, and for equal treatment in the present, for those people of colonial and post-colonial migrant origin and their families.[119] These demands ask uncomfortable questions about the genealogies of current forms of inequality in France and tie them in to the French state. Indeed, the only partial success of this memory campaigning arguably relates to the way in which the case of 17 October highlights an act of colonial repression that occurred within a democratically elected Republican regime. If some racialized colonial and post-colonial groups within the French polity question elements of Republicanism, they do so based upon their lived experiences of this political model which has treated them with profound ambivalence.[120]

We have already seen that the memory 'battles' linked to the Algerian War oppose groups competing for the status of victims and the leeway such status then gives them to demand various forms of reparations from the French state. This 'competition' between victims is often presented as similar to the memorial battles between those having suffered Nazi persecution and between those groups and victims of other atrocities.[121] This can result in each victim group being incapable of seeing the suffering of the other group(s). An identity of victim necessarily suggests a victimizer, hence the memory of enmity is cultivated, sustained, and transmitted. How does this apply to the debates on 17 October?

At times, campaigning to have Algerians accepted as victims of state repression (itself a political struggle) has overly concentrated on the notion of state crime which risks sealing Algerians off within an identity of victims. The persistent official denials that wide-scale killings took place channelled such protest. However, a fully contextualized reading of the period, and the demonstrations, has shown that we also need to consider Algerians as political actors protesting on 17 October not only against their victimization by the security forces but for independence. The initial memory campaigners from within the Algerian migrant communities (i.e. Sans Frontière) sought to promote this reading against the image of the parents' generation as eternal political, social, and racial victims and hence re-establish post-colonial agency. There was therefore a difficult space for memory activists to navigate between those arguments that refused Algerians a victim status on the one hand, and other arguments that limited them to an identity as victims based on a critique of the French state. The simplistic narrative of the

[119] Stora, 'La Mémoire retrouvée', 82–3.
[120] House, 'Anti-Racism in France'.
[121] See Chaumont, *La Concurrence des victimes*.

post-independence FLN from Boumediene onwards was equally unappealing. Accepting the status of victims for the Algerians subjected to state violence in 1961 should not close them off within an identity of victimhood during the war, nor should it do so for them and their descendants today. This is a difficult balancing act, and involves formulating demands for symbolic justice while rejecting feelings of revenge and without negating the suffering of other groups.[122]

Furthermore, there is also a history of Franco-Algerian solidarities to this episode that we should not lose sight of, however politically marginal it may have proved at the time, just as these solidarities continued after 1961 to carry the memories of 17 October, suggesting ways of building bridges between various groups. Memory activists may find it useful to incorporate historiographical advances in colonial studies, especially given the obfuscation of some of the more complex factors linked to the 17 October events, and the ongoing memorial reconfigurations of 17 October ever further distanced from the period to which they refer. Similarly, historians can use the insights, interpretations, and questioning that such memory work has produced.

CONCLUSION

Campaigning has discredited the official French version of 17 October, and brought many people to think about this episode differently. However, such campaigning has attempted to 'collectivize' the memory of 17 October in a context where the Algerian state has played a problematic role and the French state only a minor role. A wider reflection on France's colonial legacies, which would ground the memory of 17 October more firmly in France, is only starting to emerge, in part due to reluctance of the mainstream right and left to examine difficult aspects of their wartime positions and hence provide the necessary political 'space' for hearing such memories and increasing public receptivity. This reminds us that what James Clifford calls the 'discrepant temporalities' of racialized post-colonial groups—for whom the key dates and events of French national history do not, will not, and cannot tell the whole story—are only beginning to force wider recognition by French society at large.[123]

Many commentators rightly cite 17 October as an example of how deep public and popular silence and obfuscation can extend regarding past events, and how remarkable their subsequent unearthing may prove. Yet to speak of 'unearthing', 'retrieval', or 'return' of memory is deceptive, since memories, when unearthed, are not unchanged, and do not return in the same form or shape, in the same context: indeed, they may well be carried by new groups with a different relationship

[122] See also the association Ici et là-bas, <*http://icietlabas.lautre.net*>.

[123] James Clifford, *Routes: Travel and Translation in the Late Twentieth Century* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1997), 263.

to past, present, and future. Perhaps the memories of 17 October are best understood in this sense, as a continual reconfiguration of the past, continually losing and adding elements and symbolic meanings as the decades progress, reflecting the evolving symbolic investments of the different individuals and groups carrying such memories, and the way these memories may be mobilized politically.

Conclusion

Research on this project took place during a peak in public debates relating to the events of 17 October 1961. As we have seen, these debates remained overly concerned with issues of number counting, and with exposing the responsibility of key actors. However, this 'activist' phase from 1997 to 2001 served a number of important functions. First, it acted as a catalyst in generating or reviving an interest in France's colonial past.[1] Second, the events of 17 October became an important symbol for social movements against racism and for symbolic justice, in a context of decline in the influence of parties of the left. Third, such movements exemplified longer term counter-memorial practices that had developed since the late 1960s,[2] and created a social and political 'space' in which the memories of 17 October could be more widely heard within French society. Campaigners refused the French state's version as well as the instrumentalized memory of 17 October used by the Algerian state, and the earlier displacement of 17 October within the anti-fascist tradition. Fourth, memory activism has forced the opening of previously closed archives, a measure essential to advances in historiography. Additionally, such activism created a new awareness of the extent to which colonial violence and practices were played out within the metropolitan sphere as well as in the colonies. A measure of the overall impact of the 'activist' phase is that it has succeeded in placing the events of 17 October within mainstream historiography, both in the form of narrative histories of the Algerian War[3] and of general histories of contemporary France.[4]

However, the initial 'activist' phase has at the same time served to impede a wider and richer field of historical investigation. Opposing parties, powerful conservative forces (army generals, former police officers, and ex-ministers) and also some left-wing memory activists have tended to adopt inflexible or fixed positions that have led to an instrumentalization of the past. Some memory activism has focused too narrowly on specific individuals within the repressive apparatus, rather than analysing the workings of the wider system in which they were located.

Our aim as historians, whose role is to explain the past and its continuing presence and reconfiguration in memory, has been to adopt a more rigorous

[1] See e.g. Bancel et al., *La République coloniale*.

[2] For different interpretations of this and similar processes, see Pierre Nora, 'L'Ère de la commémoration', in his *Les Lieux de mémoire III*, iii: *De l'archive à l'emblème*, *Les France* (Paris: Gallimard, 1992); Raphael Samuels, *Theatres of Memory* (London: Verso, 1994).

[3] Thénault, *Histoire de la guerre*, 234–40.

[4] See e.g. Rod Kedward, *La Vie en bleu: France and the French since 1900* (London: Allen Lane, 2005), 627–30.

methodology that embeds 17 October within the politics of memory as it has evolved over four decades. Central to our research questions has been the desire move beyond a narrow spatial or temporal focus to a deeper historical contextualization. As we have shown, it is not possible to understand or interpret how and why these violent events occurred, how they became buried from view, nor how they resurfaced, without taking a much longer time-frame. This time-frame reaches both back and forward, looking at the genealogies and memorial afterlives of the events.

As this project developed, it became increasingly evident that our work has shown a convergence or concordance with a more general and ongoing shift in the field of historical research on the Algerian War and colonialism. Historians studying the Algerian War have noted that the passage of time has not, as might have been expected, created a climate in which the heated passion of participants has subsided, giving way to a more 'objective' and dispassionate view of the past.[5] On the contrary, memories of enmity and rancour can coexist alongside calls for more open, plural memories of the war. Historians of the war often express frustration that their work is co-opted to fit given polemical stances. In France, there is currently a partially blocked situation: government has made some minor gestures towards official recognition of its past role in the organization of colonial violence, but further shifts are far from guaranteed. Indeed, as Chapter 12 showed, official positions can move backwards rather than forwards. There is, perhaps, even less willingness on the part of the Algerian state to facilitate an academic reassessment of the colonial encounter, the diversity of organized resistance to French colonial rule, or an examination of ALN violence against civilian populations of whatever origin.

However, despite such impediments, there are many indicators that historical interpretation of the war is entering into a new, dynamic, and prolific phase, marked in particular by the work of a new generation of historians (Linda Amiri, Raphaëlle Branche, Claire Mauss-Copeaux, Laure Pitti, Sylvie Thénault) as well as already established researchers such as Mohammed Harbi and Gilbert Meynier. This refreshing drive to a new history has been made possible, in part, by the access to previously closed archives, but also by a long and concerted struggle to break free from official or standardized versions of the war. These historians have addressed the deeper causality of events by analysing the plurality of and interaction between social and political actors of the war.

This book on 17 October has hopefully contributed to this paradigm shift and has indicated some avenues for future investigation that reflect or run parallel to the broader field of Algerian War studies. First, we can note in such studies a move away from a tendency to centre on individual or group responsibility or culpability, or the defence of 'acquired' positions (from those of *pieds-noirs* and *harki* militants to FLN or PCF apologists). Instead, we see an investigation of the

[5] Branche, *La Guerre d'Algérie*, 43–9, 121–3, 136–7, 161–70, 207–9, 228–31.

deeper political and social structures of the age, the complex apparatus of state power and nationalist movements, and the interaction between political and military forces. Second, at the opposite extreme from the investigation of the state, and decision-making process, lies the need to gain a better understanding of the diversity of experiences at the micro-level of the Algerian migrants in France, as for the Algerian population in Algeria. Most of the published work on the war has centred on the political dimension of the elite FLN and French participants and has made little attempt to investigate the social history of the mass of ordinary Algerian people and their fundamental role as actors in the drama.[6] Likewise, much research still needs to be undertaken on metropolitan public opinion. Third, the Algerian War in metropolitan France—our study included—is often a war centred on Paris, and future studies will need to interrogate the articulation of local and national political and social dynamics for key cities such as Marseille and Lyon.

Fourth, Anglo-American postcolonial historiography has shown an increasing interest in the dialectical inter-relationships between metropolis and colony, as well as in a comparative approach to empires and decolonization.[7] There are signs of French historiography moving, belatedly, in this direction.[8] Our case study has provided some insights into such a dynamic, by highlighting the constant exchange of techniques of policing and legal procedures between Algeria and France, forming a *savoir-faire* of colonial governance. Furthermore, we have seen a wider internationalization of this *savoir-faire* across imperial systems (e.g. Great-Britain, USA),[9] and more global comparison can only cast further light on such practices. Third, we have highlighted the merging of policing measures with other forms of social and administrative control, forms which continued after 1962 to leave a powerful impact on the structures and practices of post-colonial

[6] See the following studies and publications moving the academic debate forward: Meynier, *Histoire intérieure*; Linda Amiri's forthcoming doctoral thesis at the Institut d'Études politiques, Paris ('La Fédération de France du FLN (1954–1962): Son organisation politico-administrative, ses groupes armés, son collectif d'avocats et ses réseaux de soutien'); the Algerian journal *Naqd* (Critique). Laure Pitti's thesis on Algerian workers at Renault ('Ouvriers algériens') will be published by Éditions Bouchène as *Ouvriers et militants algériens aux usines Renault de Billancourt, 1945–1975*. Historical work done within or inspired by the Subaltern Studies group arguably has much to offer studies of Algerian anti-colonial resistance. See Dipesh Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe: Postcolonial Thought and Historical Difference* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000).

[7] See Ann Laura Stoler and Frederick Cooper, 'Between Metropole and Colony: Rethinking a Research Agenda', in their *Tensions of Empire: Colonial Cultures in a Bourgeois World* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1997), 28. Alice Conklin, *A Mission to Civilize: The Republican Idea of Empire in France and West Africa, 1895–1930* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1997).

[8] See Olivier Le Cour Grandmaison, *Coloniser, Exterminer: Sur la guerre et l'état colonial* (Paris: Fayard, 2005); Peyroulou, 'Rétablir et maintenir l'ordre'; Blanchard, 'La Dissolution des Brigades nord-africaines'; Amiri, *La Bataille de France*.

[9] On the links between the French, Argentinian, United States, and other militaries during and after the Algerian War, see Marie-Monique Robin, *Escadrons de la mort, l'école française* (Paris: La Découverte, 2004).

institutions, immigration policy, and local government (e.g. public housing) in France.[10] Finally in this respect, we have shown how memories of colonial governance and anti-colonial resistance were formed on both sides of the Mediterranean, and how such memories continued a process of mutual influence after 1962: studies of the current politics of memory relating to colonialism and slavery point to a wider academic field now emerging on these questions.[11]

The study has also explored deeper transformations in the focus of memory work, as many groups and individuals seek to reconstruct family trajectories relating to 17 October. Chapter 12 surveyed the increasingly rich series of cultural representations across fiction, theatre, and cinema.[12] These cultural representations often subvert or move beyond over-rigid and entrenched ideological positions, and provide a fruitful site of exchange between Algeria and France. We need more comparative work on how these cultural representations compare to those of other memory carriers of the Algerian War, in addition to memory carriers of other wars.[13] In addition, comparative insights into the inter-generational dynamics of memory from various fields and contexts (e.g. Holocaust Studies, the South American cone), as of 17 October, can only enrich our understanding of such processes.

To conclude, both in relation to the events of 17 October and more widely, we are seeing an increasing polarization between the various processes of complexification in terms of historical inquiry and memorial representations and the persisting over-simplification of 'sealed' memories that reinforce ingrained wartime positions. The memory 'battles' linked to 17 October stem from fundamentally opposed ways of dealing with and mobilizing the past. There are those who refuse to reconsider the past, viewing this as a sign of lack of national unity: in the case of the French state, unity only being built on the condition that the past be forgotten, or, for the Algerian state, a unity achieved by a 'sealed' official memory. On the other side are those memory activists for whom the construction of a more open post-colonial future in both France and Algeria depends upon a critical examination of the colonial past and the links between past and present. Reconciling these two, very different ways of viewing the past is one of the most significant challenges facing post-colonial France and Algeria, and the shared and at times tense political, social, and cultural spheres that continue to link the two countries. More widely, the question of how to deal with this articulation of past, present, and future lies at the heart of the post-colonial condition.

[10] See Alexis Spire, *Étrangers à la carte: L'Administration de l'immigration en France (1945–1975)* (Paris: Grasset, 2005): Viet, *La France immigrée*.

[11] See Patrick Weil and Stéphane Dufoix (eds.), *L'Esclavage, la colonisation, et après… France, États-Unis, Grande-Bretagne* (Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 2005).

[12] Anny Dayan Rosenman and Lucette Valensi (eds.), *La Guerre d'Algérie dans la mémoire et l'imaginaire* (Saint-Denis: Éditions Bouchène, 2004).

[13] See Ashplant et al., *The Politics of War Memory*.

Guide to Research Sources and Bibliography

The following is a brief guide to the different archive and interview sources used, accompanied by a list of principal further material on the war.

I. ARCHIVE SOURCES

Archives de la Confédération française démocratique du travail, Paris

CFTC Archives confédérales (*ACON CFTC*)
6 H 19 and 6 H 20, Secrétariat confédéral.
6 H 23, Positions confédérales et contacts avec AGTA, 1960, UGTA, 1961.
6 H 24, Action pour la paix, CFTC et autres organisations, 1961.

Archives fédérales (*ACON CFTC*)
1B 340, Fédération nationale de la Métallurgie.
1F 1187, Fédération unifiée des Industries chimiques.
1K 100, Fédération Générale des Transports et de l'équipement.
SGEN 1147.

Archives de la Préfecture de Police (APP), Paris (all subject to *dérogation*)

See the guide by Rémy Vallat, 'Introduction à la série H "Guerre d'Algérie" des Archives de la Préfecture de Police' (unpublished).
The following have been consulted in detail:

HA series
Boxes 1, 7, 8, 9, 14, 26, 28, 32, 33, 47, 56, 57, 59, 60, 61, 62, 65, 67, 68, 80, 84, 86, 88, 89, 91, 93, 96, 99, 106, 107, 108, 109, 110, 111, 112, 113.

H1B series
Boxes 4, 12, 13, 14, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 28, 30, 32, 34, 35, 36, 39.

Archives de la Ville de Marseille

Fonds Gaston Defferre
100 ii 282, Guerre d'Algérie, 1960–1961.
100 ii 288–290, Guerre d'Algérie, 1957–1962.

Archives départementales de la Seine-Saint-Denis (ADSSD), Bobigny

CGT-UD Seine
49 J 48, Procès-verbaux Bureau UD Seine, 1959–1966.
49 J 485, Manifestation des Algériens en France, 17 octobre 1961.
49 J 488, Journée de la paix en Algérie: 19 décembre 1961.
49 J 616 to 49 J 618, Charonne.

49 J 620, Charonne 1962.
49 J 621 and 49 J 622, Charonne: commémoration 1962.

Archives du Parti communiste français (PCF), Paris

Décisions du Secrétariat, 1961, 1962.
Bureau politique, 1961.

Centre d'accueil et de recherche des Archives nationales (CARAN), Paris

Fonds René Mayer
363 AP 32, dossier 4, correspondance M. Papon (*dérogation*).

Ministère de l'Intérieur
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II. MAIN INTERVIEW SOURCES

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III. NEWSPAPERS, JOURNALS, DEBATES IN ASSEMBLIES

A very large number of French and international newspapers and journals has been consulted for the period of the Algerian War and after. These are too numerous to list, but for newspaper reports relating specifically to 17 October and the repression in Paris we

depended mainly on the full texts available in the Bibliothèque nationale de France, Paris (see *www.bnf.fr*).

The Prefecture of Police kept extensive press cuttings on the 17 October events. These can be found in APP-HA112 and H1B36.

The library of the Institut d'Études politiques, Paris, has also established a large number of press dossiers on the Algerian War. The institute holds excellent collections of contemporary and secondary sources on the Algerian War and its sequels (see *www.sciences-po.fr/docum/*), as does the Bibliothèque de documentation internationale contemporaine, Nanterre (*www.bdic.fr*). Transcriptions of debates at the Conseil municipal de Paris and the Conseil général de la Seine are available at the Bibliothèque administrative de la Ville de Paris (Hôtel de Ville, Paris).

IV. PHOTOGRAPHIC AND FILM SOURCES

The fullest range of published photographs on the events of 17 October is in Anne Tristan, *Le Silence du fleuve* (Bezons: Au nom de la mémoire, 1991). For a fuller discussion of war photography and a useful bibliography, see Laurent Gervereau and Benjamin Stora (eds.), *Photographier la guerre d'Algérie* (Paris: Marval, 2004). On the important photographs of Élie Kagan, see his book with Jean-Luc Einaudi, *17 octobre 1961* (Paris: Actes Sud, 2001), and Thérèse Blondet Bisch, 'Élie Kagan, graver les traces', in Olivier Le Cour Grandmaison (ed.), *Le 17 octobre 1961: Un crime d'état à Paris* (Paris: La Dispute, 2001), 161–70. Kagan's photographs are held at the BDIC. Many of the original photographs taken by journalists during the events (e.g. for *L'Humanité* and *Paris-Match*), have in recent years been acquired by international agencies, and are not easy to locate or consult, but some can be found on the internet, see for example the Keystone agency (*www.keystone-photo.com*). Jacques Panijel's film *Octobre à Paris* (1962) remains unavailable for public viewing. The Forum des images in Paris has a number of key documentary films on 17 October, including *Le Silence du fleuve* (Mehdi Lallaoui and Agnès Denis, 1991), and *Dissimulation d'un massacre* (Daniel Kupferstein, 2001) (*www.forumdesimages.net*).

V. INTERNET SOURCES

There is a growing volume of information on the internet, listing initiatives throughout France concerning the ongoing campaigns and debates on 17 October and Maurice Papon. Entry of '17 octobre 1961, Paris' into a major search engine (*www.yahoo.fr*) will produce a mass of sources. The most complete website is that of the association Le 17 octobre contre l'oubli, containing many testimonies, and a bibliography and filmography (*http://17octobre1961.free.fr/*). For details of events and publications on the history and memory of immigration, see the association Génériques (*www. generiques.org*).

VI. SECONDARY SOURCES

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and the bibliographical guide also by Gilbert Meynier in *NAQD*, 14/15 (autumn/winter 2001), 97–162. See also the extensive discussion of historiography on the war by Raphaëlle Branche, *La Guerre d'Algérie: Une histoire apaisée?* (Paris: Seuil, 2005). Sylvie Thénault's *Histoire de la guerre d'indépendance algérienne* (Paris: Flammarion, 2005), contains a useful guide to sources (pp. 281–9).

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